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Inter-Arab Affairs

ACC News Agencies Open Conference in Cairo

Conference Seeks Cooperation

NC0912141189 Cairo MENA in English 1221 GMT 9 Dec 89

[Text] Cairo, Dec 9 (MENA)—Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif will inaugurate here tomorrow the first conference of news agencies of the Arab Cooperation Council [ACC] states, due to run for three days. The conference will discuss means of achieving cooperation between the news agencies of Egypt, Iraq, Jordan and North Yemen, at the invitation of the MIDDLE EAST NEWS AGENCY [MENA].

Mustafa Najib, board chairman and editor-in-chief of MENA, said that Egypt will submit to the conference three working papers. The first working paper deals with establishment of an ACC news agencies pool which will have a branch in each member state. The second deals with means of achieving integration and coordination between the four news agencies. The third working paper deals with means of achieving integration between technical machinery in these states, he added.

The MENA board chairman and editor-in-chief pointed out that the conference aims at discussing future of work in the ACC news agencies in order to cope with new developments in the field of news transmission through satellite.

Director general of the IRAQI NEWS GENCY 'Adnan al-Jaburi who heads the Iraqi delegation, arrived here yesterday.

Director general of the Jordanian news agency 'Ali al-Safadi leads the Jordanian delegation, while director general of the Yemeni news agency Yahya Salih al-Shukani leads the Yemeni delegation.

Egypt's Al-Sharif Opens Conference

NC1012124889 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1120 GMT 10 Dec 89

[Excerpts] Cairo, 10 Dec (MENA)—Minister of Information Safwat al-Sharif opened the first conference of Arab Cooperation Council [ACC] news agencies this morning. The conference, which is being held at the invitation of the MIDDLE EAST NEWS AGENCY [MENA], will last 3 days and will discuss ways of achieving cooperation and integration among these news agencies.

The Egyptian delegation is led by Mustafa Najib, board chairman and editor in chief of MENA; the Iraqi delegation by 'Adnan al-Jabburi, director of the IRAQI NEWS AGENCY; the Jordanian delegation by 'Ali al-Safadi, director of the JORDANIAN NEWS AGENCY (PETRA); and the Yemeni delegation by Yahya Salih al-Shukani, director of the SABA' news agency.

At the beginning of the meeting Najib delivered a speech in which he welcomed the directors of the ACC news agencies to Egypt, their second homeland. He also paid tribute to the way Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif's opened the conference, which will discuss ways of consolidating the constructive role played by the ACC news agencies.

Najib called for the establishment of an "Arab Data Bank" that will serve all the Arab media services, especially news agencies. Such a bank could be financed by the ACC secretariat general or the Arab League secretariat general, he said. In this connection, he explained that it is difficult for one news agency to shoulder the burden of financing such a data bank alone.

Najib submitted three papers on the establishment of an ACC news agencies pool that will ensure the flow of news among the four ACC states and transmit news items to the world in a single bulletin.

Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif then delivered a speech noting that today's meeting will be followed by several more, either in Cairo, Baghdad, Sanaa, or Amman. He referred in this respect to the meeting by the radio chairmen of the Arab Cooperation Council [ACC] countries in January, and to the meeting by the television chairmen in the four countries. He said that other meetings for coordination in the field of communications technology as well as cooperation in the field of media production will be held. [passage omitted]

Al-Sharif added that in the satellite age we need to utilize all our Arab capabilities and resources, whether for the purpose of news and program exchange through the various channels of ARABSAT or by using its high-powered channel, which is capable of serving the Arab world and which could also reach Africa and Europe. Al-Sharif noted that there is no need to fear satellite transmission. Egypt, he added, does not fear direct transmission and is preparing to deal with it, noting that this is where technological advance is heading in the coming generations. He added that for this purpose, Egypt has prepared itself and ensured that its media reach all Egyptian territories so that the citizens can develop a sense of affiliation with their national media and so that they may not feel estranged in their own land.

He added: Therefore, there is no need for concern in this respect, because the Egyptians, no matter where they are, will be able to cope with the requirements of the age. He stressed that this firm and clear position must be adopted by the Egyptian media, noting that this technological development, as demonstrated by satellites, cannot be handled by prevention or by barriers.

Al-Sharif stressed in his speech the need for optimum use of the resources available to ARABSAT effectively and practically at the cultural, information, and technical levels. He pointed out that Egyptian media are not in a confrontation with the direct transmission and do not treat it as an offensive or an invasion. He said we are the heirs to a great culture and civilization, and therefore our

response must be one of diversifying and increasing our radio broadcasts and television channels and promoting the circulation of our press to provide the citizens with audio, visual, and published information that suits the various cultural levels, ensuring an atmosphere of freedom, democracy, and competition in the media and upgrading the form and substance of programming. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs

Khalaf Says PLO Delegation for Talks Formed

LD1512095689 Kuwait KUNA in English 0835 GMT 15 Dec 89

[Text] Kuwait, Dec 15 (KUNA)—Central Committee member of the Palestinian commando movement "Fatah" Salah Khalaf was quoted here saying the PLO has already formed the Palestinian delegation for dialogue with Israel since the issue has been raised.

In an interveiw with the Kuwaiti daily AL-WATAN, Khalaf said the PLO is the only party which is entitled to determine the names of the Palestinian delegation to negotiations with Israel.

Khalaf, better known as Abu-Iyad, said the PLO would announce the list of names at the appropriate time, and categorically reject any Arab intervention in forming the delegation.

The PLO, he stressed, will never entrust any Arab country with the task of conducting dialogue with Israel on behalf of the PLO.

Replying to a question on the current Egyptian political moves, Khalaf said Egypt tries to play a role in support of political moves "but we have to differentiate between the Egyptian role which we welcomed and a attempt to represent the Palestinians and speaking on their behalf."

"Baker's plan itself said the Americans understand that Egypt does not speak for the Palestinians," he noted.

The PLO-U.S. dialogue has not come to an end but the Americans chose to discuss Baker's plan through Egypt as they still try to ignore facts on the ground.

Khalaf explained that the PLO believed at the beginning the Egyptian role would facilitate the peace process but it has become evident that the U.S. and Israel want Egypt as a representative to the Palestinians "and I think the Egyptians do not accept that exactly as we reject it."

Abu-Iyad stressed the Palestinians would not use arms in the uprising areas and armed struggle from outside occupied Palestine has not been ceased and will continue to be used.

Over PLO-Syrian relations, Khalaf said the PLO has decided to send a Palestinian delegation to Syria and will soon send such a delegation to Damascus to open a new chapter in PLO-Syrian relations.

Khalaf on U.S., Hamas, Jordanian Relations

JN0812113289 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 8 Dec 89 pp 8, 15

[Interview with Fatah Central Committee member Salah Khalaf by Basim Sakkijha in Tunis; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] [Sakkijha] Changes in Eastern Europe certainly affect the Palestine question. What do you think?

[Khalaf] We are indeed apprehensive, not about a reversal of political views, but about the possibility of this change moving in the direction of the West European position. It is difficult to say at this point whether the fears are real or not. So far, the change has appeared to be in favor of Israel, but there is no negative change toward us, unless, of course, we consider positive change toward Israel as negative toward us. The change is not directed at us, but we fear that Eastern Europe—and I do not mean the Soviet Union here—may change its traditional views on supporting the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, knowing, however, that this is not an easy thing to happen. At any rate, it is very difficult to predict the way the wind is blowing right now. [passage omitted]

[Sakkijha] What about the Soviet Union?

[Khalaf] The Soviet stance toward our cause is as positive as it has always been, but the Soviet position toward Israel has changed, and there is now free immigration, air links, and undeclared contacts. This, surely, has its impact, but we cannot talk about a turnabout in the Soviet stance. The foreign ministers of the two sides have met on many occasions, and the estrangement has become less intense. But this is natural if the Soviet Union is to play a role in the peace process, regardless of its position toward this party or that. I do not think that the Soviet position toward the Palestine question has changed. [passage omitted]

[Sakkijha] What is the truth of the relationship between the PLO and Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]?

[Khalaf] Since the intifadah erupted, we have been advocating the policy of united action; we are not in conflict with any party in the field. But some Hamas leaders were trying to portray themselves as leaders of the intifadah and to emerge as an alternative force to the PLO. They actually tried to drive the Palestinian people in the occupied territories into opposing the resolutions of the Palestine National Council adopted in Algiers and other things. Nevertheless, the people did not respond to them, and thus they lost this political round and felt the moral weight of the PLO among the Palestinian people, although they have some weight themselves in some areas. They then went back on this line and began to coordinate with the Unified National Leadership of the Intifadah through the Fatah Movement. Regrettably, I must say that calls for separation and differentation, as

well as attempts to assume alternative roles, still characterize some Hamas leaders. However, the bulk of Hamas is not affected by this, because the majority believes in collective action.

The only distinction now is that the Hamas leaders announce the activities of the intifadah on its own, without sometimes abiding by the activities determined by the Unified National Leadership.

[Sakkijha] But there was a "war of strikes" last month.

[Khalaf] I am not saying that the issue is over now. I am saying that there is coordination in most cases, but some individuals in Hamas still want to stand out. They are still living off illusions, and this mentality is known; it was born and is being fed from abroad. But we say that this does not sell well in the occupied territories. People are subjected to coercion; so, should we face this united or divided? We therefore say that Muslim Brotherhood leaders abroad should not fan the flames of this problem because their national and religious duty is to unite people, especially since we are one people. The inhabitants of Bayt Sahur, who confronted the occupation, waged strikes, and refused to pay taxes are all Christians. What shall we say to them: "You are not Palestinians and have no link to national action?" This was a blow to all those who are trying to harm Palestinian unity.

[Sakkijha] Is Hamas growing in the West Bank and Gaza?

[Khalaf] As a matter of fact, they are supported by Israeli-American logic because their call has become unclear. They sometimes reject the call for liberation from the Jordan River to the sea. Shaykh Ahmad al-Yasin and others from Hamas make contradictory statements; they call for the complete liberation of Palestinian soil and for not dealing with the political proposals. At the same time, they say they agree on the political initiatives and on holding elections.

In any case, I say that the most important thing is that Hamas should not place itself in the position of an alternative because it will become a partner to Israel in this position whether it likes it or not. At the same time, Hamas must not allow the Iranian influence to enter the Palestinian arena because this influence will destroy the Palestinian arena and people.

[Sakkijha] The Israeli press predicts the results of elections in the West Bank and Gaza. It says: The PLO will obtain 65 percent of the votes; Hamas will get 25 per cent; and the independents will win the rest. What is your opinion?

[Khalaf] I believe that the results of the elections—if they are held—will be 100 percent in favor of the PLO because Hamas is a part of the PLO and the PLO is one body. I only exclude the agents. [passage omitted]

[Sakkijha] How do you explain the American stand?

[Khalaf] The Americans still consider the Palestinian state a threat to the security of Israel and the region. This issue is the center of the "the building for peace" paper and is still a title in U.S. policy. Therefore the Americans refuse to recognize the PLO or deal with it directly. They deal with it through this or that side. This is a real breakdown.

[Sakkijha] How and when can this position be changed?

[Khalaf] When the state of changing becomes more dangerous than the existence of the Palestinian state itself.

[Sakkijha] How?

[Khalaf] Leave this how for me.

[Sakkijha] Will the Lebanese solution be achieved at the expense of the Palestinian presence?

[Khalaf] We proceed on this issue on the basis of the Lebanese people's interests in reaching a cease-fire and stopping the bloodshed. This issue must be recorded. No individual in the PLO opposes this principled issue.

The other issue is Lebanon's unity—land and people. This issue cannot be bargained over. The PLO's interests do not clash with these two issues.

The third principle states that in order to unite Lebanon it must have a president. We supported these issues in the al-Ta'if agreement.

What remains is the question of the non-Lebanese forces. With regard to the Israeli forces, everyone agrees: The occupation must end. The Palestinian and Lebanese rifles cannot differ. If an agreement is reached on the presence or withdrawal of the Syrian forces, we will support it and follow it immediately, but not like 15 years ago, through shelling and destruction. We want guarantees for the camps and for our people's freedom, action, and security. When these guarantees are available we will support the solution and cannot go against it.

[Sakkijha] Let us go back to the American stance at the United Nations.

[Khalaf] As I said a short while ago, Washington is still searching for incomplete solutions and solutions that cover its position in front of the Arabs and the whole world, which is asking Washington to find a solution. In light of this policy, Washington adopts such stands at the international organizations that the PLO tries to join. The FAO [UN Food and Agriculture Organization], for example, is a food organization; I wonder how Washington can be so intransigent on this issue.

During his visit to Washington, Shamir was not accorded a good reception and he heard tough remarks. In other words, they told him: You went too far. The reason is that he was undermining the Baker plan. At this point, the Zionist lobby moved on the U.S. Administration and applied pressure, making it cover up for its views with

intransigence toward the PLO within international organizations. We believe that we have the right to present a request in which we say that we want "the state of Palestine" instead of "Palestine." However, they say if the word "state" is mentioned the initiative will be undermined. This shows the magnitude of the rabid campaign the United States has launched against the PLO.

[Sakkijha] The issue of the provisional Palestinian government was raised recently. Is there an intention to form such a government?

[Khalaf] In fact, I was surprised by these statements because we now have the president of the state of Palestine and the Executive Committee which is charged with carrying out the tasks of the Palestinian government. Therefore, the issue is resolved; it was not discussed by the Palestinian leadership. There is no need for discussing this issue before things become clear: Will there be a settlement or not? If there is an international conference we will think about it. It is possible that there is no chance to think of it now.

[Sakkijha] How far has the Baker plan gone, and what about the messages and questions exchanged to this effect?

[Khalaf] On 2 December 1989, we presented the Palestinian response after consultations and replies from and to the Egyptians and Americans. We are waiting for the American response to our position. And this does not prevent that in the future we will announce to the world the questions we addressed during this period from 15 October 1989 to 3 December 1989—the questions, answers, and our responses to the answers, which were all condensed in our last response communicated to Cairo, Washington, and other countries.

This is the general picture. In particular, however, the Baker plan is nebulous. Because of this, we forwarded many questions in an attempt to fill the nebulous gaps in the plan. Sometimes we received more nebulous answers. Consequently, we had to seek clarifications once again. The process was long and tiresome, particularly since the issue is related to your existence. It is the issue of the Palestinian representation: Do you represent yourself or not? They presented representation as a basis. The proposed role of the PLO was invisible. It had to agree on the plan and say: Leave the matter for the Egyptians. What makes us accept this? We do not adhere to an idol called the PLO; the PLO is a real representative of the Palestinian people and the issue of representation is the greatest achievement of the Palestinian people in 70 years.

Through Baker's plan, the Americans want to pull our right to represent the Palestinians with our own consent. This is the real battle. Some Arabs say "be flexible," and we say, "leave the question of representation to us and take your flexibility." What matters is the question of representation; if we compromise on this, then the question will hinge on our very presence. It is true that Israel accepted the Baker plan, but, at the same time, it rejected it by introducing conditions, which it termed assumptions. There is also the memorandum that Arens distributed to the whole world. In the memorandum, Arens makes it clear that Israel will deal neither directly nor indirectly with the PLO. He also says in this memorandum that the PLO is a terrorist organization threatening the world. He refers to the West Bank as Judaea and Samaria, meaning that it is part of Israel. He, then, wants to negotiate only over the problem of Arab inhabitants and to give them something to make their daily life easier.

The content of the plan, as interpreted by Israel, is not acceptable. The plan also does not address the question of representation. In our response, we have laid the bases for a settlement. We said: If Baker's plan is so nebulous and its words can be assigned more than their true meanings, then this is our response.

[Sakkijha] What do you expect the U.S. reaction to be?

[Khalaf] We have tried to be flexible but without abandoning our rights. When the Palestinian response is published, after we accept or reject it, this fact will be clear. We hope the U.S. reaction will be favorable because this is the most we could give; it is the maximum flexibility in Palestinian action.

[Sakkijha] What is the prospect for the process as a whole?

[Khalaf] The prospect is for the Palestinian-Israeli dialogue to take place. After that, the problems and the various issues will be discussed, and, thus, progress in the peace process will be made and we may ultimately have the international conference. These are the proposed steps.

[Sakkijha] What about future Jordanian-Palestinian relations?

[Khalaf] I say that on the day immediately following the establishment of the Palestinian state, we will begin unity with Jordan. I am not concerned what kind of unity this may be, because we are one people and have the same history. You cannot make distinctions between a Jordanian and a Palestinian. It is true that we encourage unity between Arab peoples, but the relationship between Jordan and Palestine in particular is clearly distinctive; all those who tried in the past and are still trying to create divisions between the Jordanian and Palestinian people have failed. We indeed constitute one people. Some have tried to call for non-Palestinian participation in the Jordanian elections. All official and popular circles attest to the fact that we did not interfere in the elections. But there has never been any public or secret calls for the Palestinians not to participate in the elections just because they are Palestinians.

When the Palestinian state and unity is established, this problem will be solved; it will not exist. The Jordanian will be a Palestinian and the Palestinian a Jordanian. This problem is solved as far as we are concerned

because we do not have any problem with Jordan and our principal conflict is with Israel, which wants neither Jordan nor Palestine to exist.

Calls for divisions between Jordanians and Palestinians are endless and they create problems. And I do not want to blame anyone. [passage omitted]

Reports of Palestinian-Israeli Meeting Denied

JN1512065989 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2130 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Text] Tunis, 14 Dec (INA)—A Palestinian source has denied reports about a Palestinian proposal to hold a Palestinian-Israeli dialogue in the Polish capital, Sofia. [as received]

The PALESTINE NEWS AGENCY—WAFA last night cited the Palestinian sources as saying that these reports are unfounded.

Reports attributed to a spokesman for the Polish Foreign Ministry said Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat made this proposal to Jan Majewski, Poland's deputy foreign minister [title as received], during their meeting in Tunis last Tuesday and asked him to convey this proposal to the Zionist entity.

PLO Representative Meets With U.S. Envoy

LD1412143189 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 2300 GMT 13 Dec 89

[Text] A meeting has been held in Tunis between PLO representative Hakam Bal'awi and U.S. Ambassador Robert Pelletreau Jr. WAFA reported that this second meeting within a week fell within the context of the continued intensive Palestinian-U.S. meetings. These consultations are tracking the development of the peace process, the latest developments concerning it, and the efforts exerted in this direction to achieve practical progress in the peace process in the Middle East.

PLO's Ahmad Argues for Rejecting U.S. Offers

JN1212205889 Kuwait AL-SIYASAH in Arabic 11 Dec 89 p 5

[By Bassam al-Qassas]

[Excerpts] 'Abd-al-Rahim Ahmad, secretary general of the Arab Liberation Front, PLO Executive Committee member, and official of the popular unions, has declared that the Americans wish to drag us toward capitulation and not peace.

He has called for an Arab strategy that makes the Arab nation's pressure and resources support the Palestinian national leadership and the intifadah as an Arab and Palestinian duty.

'Abd-al-Rahim Ahmad was speaking at a seminar yesterday evening at the social scientists' league in al-'Adayliyah, in the presence of the staff of the Palestinian Embassy in Kuwait, a number of Arab ambassadors, and a group of other people, on the occasion of the intifadah's 2d anniversary. [passage omitted]

Commenting on the Palestinian peace initiative—which has scored many points in its favor—and on the U.S. and Zionist positions on it, he noted that the U.S. position became evident quickly. It abandoned the role of a mediator to become totally biased in favor of the Zionist entity. It tries to rob the Palestinian side of all its cards and power.

He added: At a time when the U.S. Administration is putting pressure on us to drag us into its traps, and some of us accept that by claiming forbearance at one time and international changes at another, we find that this administration takes every opportunity to express its animosity toward our rights and signs affirming our national identity. At the United Nations, it openly threatened and threw its weight around to prevent Palestine from becoming a member state. Previously, it strongly opposed our participation in international organizations and bodies.

Therefore, we should not expect anything from the U.S. Administration. We should not wager on essential changes in its position on our cause. We are forced to deal with the Baker plan with clear and frank vision and move away from the nebulous stands, which have more than one explanation. What the Americans are offering does not supply the basic minimum of our national aspirations and does not respond to the desires and wishes of our people. Therefore, we must reject it. [passage omitted]

U.S.-Israeli 'Tension' Seen Over PLO Dialogue

PM1412113989 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 13 Dec 89 pp 1-2

[Report by Muhammad Sadiq: "Diplomatic Sources Tell AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Bush Administration Dissatisfied With Shamir's Statements and Arens' Threats"]

[Text] Cairo, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT Bureau, Washington—Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir's recent statements and Foreign Minister Moshe Arens' threats not to participate in the tripartite ministerial meeting expected to be held in the middle of next month have provoked a wave of censure in U.S. Administration circles.

Well-informed diplomatic sources in the U.S. capital have told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that officials in U.S. President George Bush's administration are not pleased with Shamir's statements, especially his equating of Jordan with Palestine, or with Arens' threats. They consider these unhelpful and negative in terms of providing impetus for the peace process, which extensive efforts are being made to push forward.

The sources added that Bush administration officials had been informed of Egypt's position on these statements, which they consider place new obstacles in the way of peace efforts. The sources also said that the officials expressed their displeasure with them. And extensive contacts will be made in the coming days to clarify positions and prepare for the tripartite meeting and agree on a date for it. [passage omitted]

Regarding the contacts and efforts made to set a date and agenda for the meeting of the U.S., Egyptian, and Israeli foreign ministers—a meeting which will be held first and foremost to agree on a Palestinian delegation for talks with Israel—the sources told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that contacts and efforts are continuing, but no specific date for the meeting has been set. Nor has a solution been found to the problem of the names of the Palestinian delegation to the dialogue with the Israelis in Cairo. They also said that consultations are continuing with both the PLO, and the Americans, and the Israelis.

In that regard it has been clear that the PLO is displaying flexibility concerning the names list issue, because it is satisfied that its role in the peace process is guaranteed. And Arens' threats not to participate in the tripartite meeting prove this, because Israel believes that it will eventually find itself entering the negotiation process with the PLO.

Some observers expect further tension in relations between Washington and Tel Aviv if Israel refuses to respond to the peace calls and continue to adhere to its stances and demands that the PLO should have no direct or indirect role in the peace process—something the U.S. Administration rejects.

In Cairo, Palestinian sources confirmed that the talks to be held in Cairo this week by Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and President Mubarak will review the Palestinian position on the points to be discussed at the tripartite meeting.

In an exclusive statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT the sources pointed out that the Egyptian president was anxious to hold direct consultations with King Husayn of Jordan and President 'Arafat before Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid leaves for Washington to participate in the tripartite meeting, the objective being to unify the Arab position toward what the U.S. Administration will propose at that meeting.

The sources said that the tripartite meeting will discuss the Egyptian and Israeli replies to James Baker's plan, but will not consult over the names of the Palestinians nominated to participate in the Israeli-Palestinian dialogue, indicating that this is what Egypt emphasized during its contacts with both Washington and Tel Aviv and during its consultations with the PLO.

The sources added that the PLO has presented no lists to any party of the names of the Palestinians nominated to participate in the Palestinian-Israeli dialogue, emphasizing that the preparation of such a list is dependent on the U.S. reply to the Palestinian clarifications about the Baker plan, which Washington received at the end of November via Cairo and the U.S. ambassador in Tunis.

Egypt-Israel-U.S Meeting Called 'Real Plot'

JN1312173489 Kuwait AL-WATAN in Arabic 12 Dec 89 pp 1, 23

[Report by Raja Talab]

[Text] 'Abd-al-Rahim Ahmad, member of the PLO Executive Committee and secretary general of the Arab Liberation Front, has described the ongoing political attempts among Egypt, Israel, and the United States to arrange a Palestinian-Israeli dialogue without the basic participation of the PLO as a real plot against the Palestinian struggle. In a statement to AL-WATAN to be published at a later date, Ahmad said that coordination among these three parties to form a Palestine delegation that will accept a dialogue with Israel without PLO involvement is a practical plan among the three parties to implement the Palestinian section of the Camp David accords—the accords that have been buried over the past years.

The PLO Executive Committee member expressed astonishment and surprise at Egypt, which began coordinating with Israel and America. He said that the Egyptian view should be identical with that of the Palestinians.

'Abd-al-Rahim Ahmad announced that after a full year's experiment in political action on the basis of the Palestinian peace initiative, the PLO has reached a dead end because of the coordinated Israeli-U.S. rejection.

In the first Palestinian call of this kind in a year, 'Abd-al-Rahim Ahmad urged the convening of an extraordinary Palestine National Council [PNC] session to assess the experiment in Palestinian political action that began with the PNC session held in November 1988.

Islamic Jihad Movement Spokesman Interviewed

NC1112200289 Tehran International Service in Arabic 1730 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Interview with Dr Fathi Ibrahim, official spokesman for the Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine, by "our correspondent in Beirut," on the second anniversary of the Palestinian intifadah; date and place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Correspondent] Dr Fathi Ibrahim, official spokesman for the Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine, peace be upon you.

[Ibrahim] Peace be upon you and the mercy of God.

[Correspondent] What is your assessment of the blessed Islamic intifadah as it begins its 3d year.?

[Ibrahim] Praise be to God and prayers and peace on the prophet Muhammad and his kin and followers. Today the blessed Islamic intifadah enters its 3d year with the same strength and vitality which marked its outbreak 2 years ago. Over the past 2 years much was achieved on the path of blood and martyrdom on which our struggling people have trodden day after day. For 2 years, our struggling people have persisted and stood firm in the face of the Western- Zionist alliance and its agents in the region who are all trying to stop this blessed intifadah.

Two years have passed and we now begin our 3d year. In these 2 years we have succeeded in creating a new society and in giving the great values of Islam a firmer hold among our people.

Two years have passed, and we begin our 3d year by putting the Zioinst plan—which aims at eradicating the Palestinian people and denying their right to existence and life—in a tight spot politically, culturally, and historically. This is not to mention the horrendous security crisis the Zionist have endured for 40 years.

Two years have passed. More than 1,000 martyrs fell; 50,000 people were injured; hundreds if not thousands of homes were demolished; hundreds and thousands are on the run; tens of thousands are in prison. But the revolution is continuing; it is escalating, because it is the march of blood that will defeat the sword, God willing.

[Correspondent] Dr Fathi, in your capacity as one of the leaders of the Islamic Jihad Movement representing the important factor in the Palestinian equation, and in the light of the continued intifadah, how do you react to the existing capitulationist designs which are intended to abort the blessed intifadah in occupied Palestine?

[Ibrahim] Our movement, the Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine, had the honor of triggering this blessed intifadah over 2 years ago, having set the sacred homeland aflame for more than 1 year before that through its armed struggle which breathed a new life into the Palestinian people and which established new values in Palestinian society. Our movement set off the intifadah over 2 years ago while others were absent from the scene. This movement is continuing to educate and mobilize the nation in order to maintain the intifadah, to escalate it, to preserve it, and to prepare for an armed struggle that will be launched along with the civilian unrest which continues every day.

The Islamic Jihad Movement today knows that the capitulationist plans have come to a dead end and that we have to say it loud and clear: Either us or them. Our way is to persist and escalate. Our way is to step up the armed struggle. Our way is to call on the entire Muslim nation and on all the Islamic and honorable forces in the world to stand for our struggling people until they remove the cancerous tumor, Israel, from the heart of the nation.

Egypt

Resumption of Ties With Syria 'Very Imminent'

PM1312150389 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 12 Dec 89 pp 1-2

[Jamal 'Anayat report: "Mubarak Contacts Al-Asad on Eve of Summit With Al-Qadhdhafi in Libya; Egyptian Envoy Goes to Damascus"]

[Text] Cairo, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT bureau—Rapid developments at the level of Egyptian-Syrian relations indicate that the decision to resume these relations will be issued shortly. They also refer to meetings for which officials in the two countries have started to prepare, which could be at the foreign minister level, although there are reports that a summit is expected to be held. Meanwhile, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that Egyptian President Husni Mubarak will visit Libya today to hold talks with Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, who is reported to be seeking to invite Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad to join the meeting.

President Mubarak yesterday telephoned President al-Asad. And the Egyptian president decided to send a personal envoy to Damascus within the coming few days to meet with the Syrian president and convey President Mubarak's views over a number of issues of common interest.

At the same time Presidents Mubarak and Al-Asad agreed during their conversation to reopen the air route between Egypt and Syria as of yesterday. And President Mubarak issued his instructions to the competent bodies to start operating the air route between Cairo and Damascus immediately.

Egypt Air and Syrian Arab Airlines flights between the two countries were postponed after the severance of Egyptian-Syrian relations in 1977. Austrian Airlines and Yemen Airways are currently operating on the Damascus-Cairo route.

Major General 'Ali Ziku, chairman of the Egyptian Civil Aviation Authority yesterday stated that the first Egyptian plane would take off from Cairo Airport at 1430 hours today to initiate the operation of the air route between the two countries.

He also said that Egyptian airspace is now open to Syrian planes, pointing out that the airport was awaiting notification from the competent Syrian authorities to operate their flights to Cairo.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT sources in Cairo confirm that the resumption of relations between the two countries is now very imminent, especially as Cairo and Damascus have witnessed high-level contacts over recent days, in addition to the existence of serious and realistic foundations for agreement between the two countries, and there are no major conflicts between them.

Syrian Interior Minister Muhammad Harbah had participated in the Arab interior ministers' conference held recently in Cairo, where he announced that Egyptian-Syrian relations would witness important developments at the official level in the near future.

The Egyptian president has stated on many occasions that there was no disagreement between him and any Arab state. He also praised President al-Asad and described him as being a comrade-in-arms. Then the Syrian president's recent statement in which he emphasized that as an Arab citizen he would not accept that estrangement remain between Egypt and Syria, came to support observers' expectations about the imminent announcement of the restoration of relations between the two countries.

Some observers cite uncorroborated expectations that a meeting will be held today or tomorrow between Egyptian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid and Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' in Tripoli, since it has been reported that Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi is mediating between Cairo and Damascus.

Sources have told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that during President Mubarak's visit to Libya, some decisions are expected to be issued which are bound to consolidate and develop Egyptian-Libyan relations.

The meeting falls within the framework of the developments in relations between the two countries, including the opening of land, sea, and air boundaries as well as the exchange of visits by delegations.

Leaders' Telephone Call Detailed

JN1412183989 Kuwait AL-WATAN in Arabic 13 Dec 89 p 28

[Text] Cairo—Highly placed political sources in Cairo have told AL-WATAN that during the telephone conversation they had the day before yesterday, Egyptian President Husni Mubarak and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad agreed on some basic points, most important of which are:

—The need to discuss aspects of political relations between the two countries and the obstacles that led to the severance of diplomatic relations.

—The thorough discussion of points of political difference is necessary to restore Syrian-Egyptian relations on firm and solid bases.

—Syria is ready to send a Syrian envoy to Cairo if the required political consensus is not reached during the Egyptian envoy's visit to Syria.

—The need to open channels of direct political contacts between the two countries through their foreign ministries so that decisive issues can be discussed with one spirit and one mind.

'Informed' Sources Comment

JN1412204889 Kuwait AL-QABAS in Arabic 13 Dec 89 p 24

[By Tariq Hasan]

[Text] According to informed Egyptian sources, during their telephone conversation of 11 December, President Mubarak and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad discussed Lebanese issues and the Israeli-Palestinian dialogue.

Discussing Lebanon, President Mubarak, in his conversation with al-Asad, focused on the need to maintain the calm situation in Lebanon and not to drag the country into further battles and military operations. The sources said that President al-Asad had supported Mubarak in that and had described his viewpoint as correct. President al-Asad added that Syria works to entrench legitimacy in Lebanon and that he supports the current Arab efforts in this regard. President al-Asad asserted that Syria does not want a confrontation with 'Awn and hopes that current efforts to convince 'Awn to accept the legitimate government will be successful.

The two presidents agreed on the need to support the tripartite Arab committee's efforts and Israel's withdrawal from the Lebanese territory. Regarding the withdrawal of the Syrian forces, the sources cited President al-Asad as saying that it will take place when the legitimate authority extends its sovereignty over all of Lebanon, and without posing a security threat by Syria to Israel. [sentence as published]

For his part, the Egyptian president explained to his Syrian counterpart the current efforts to start an Israeli-Palestinian dialogue. President al-Asad expressed fears of the dialogue and its consequences. He warned that the failure of the dialogue might lead to further complications in the region and make the Arabs hesitate to accept any other international mediation in the future.

'Abd-al-Majid, Shevardnadze Exchange Messages

NC1312214789 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 2100 GMT 13 Dec 89

[Text] Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has sent a message to Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze. The message was delivered by Egyptian Ambassador to Moscow Ahmad Mahir.

Shevardnadze asked the Egyptian ambassador to convey an oral message to Dr 'Abd-al-Majid in reply to his message which dealt with recent developments in the Middle East. The Soviet foreign minister affirmed during the meeting that his country welcomes holding constant consultations with Egypt at various levels on the Middle East crisis. He asserted his country's desire to promote ties with Egypt in the political, trade, and economic spheres.

Shevardnadze and the Egyptian ambassador also discussed several issues connected with the situation in the Middle East and Egypt's efforts to hold a Palestinian-Israeli dialogue. The 1-hour discussion also dealt with the situation in Lebanon and ways of strengthening relations between Egypt and the USSR.

Zairian Foreign Minister Arrives in Cairo 13 Dec

NC1312195689 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1923 GMT 13 Dec 89

[Text] Cairo, 13 Dec (MENA)—Zairian Foreign Minister Nguz a Karl-i-Bond arrived in Cairo this evening as envoy of Zairian President Mobutu Sese Seko.

In an arrival statement, the Zairian minister stated that he is carrying a written message to President Husni Mubarak in his capacity as chairman of the OAU and president of Egypt from President Mobutu. He described the relations in the economic and political fields between Egypt and Zaire as excellent, noting the agreement in views between them on various issues.

The Zairian foreign minister was welcomed at the airport by Ambassador 'Aziz Sayf-al-Nasr, assistant foreign minister, and Ambassador Sami Thabit, protocol director at the Foreign Ministry.

Libyan Agricultural Officer on Food Exchange

JN1312164589 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 11 Dec 89 p 1

[By Safwat Muhammad]

[Text] The agricultural trade unions' councils in Egypt and Libya have decided to form a joint committee to discuss the importation and exportation of red meat, poultry, eggs, and fruit between the two countries so they can become self-sufficient in these products.

Import and export activities will start at the beginning of January. This is what Eng Ahmad Ibn-Fayid, Libyan secretary for the agricultural engineering conference, told AL-AKHBAR.

He said agricultural groups will be formed around the regions of the great river in Libya to augment agricultural areas, reclaim new land, realize self-sufficiency, and settle large numbers of people in those regions. He asserted this will be done through Egyptian and Libyan expertise. Egyptian technicians and agricultural workers from both countries will set up the basic structure and perform the engineering, technical, and agricultural operations. Implementation will start at the beginning of March 1990. He added an office will open at the Egyptian agricultural federation to receive applications of those willing to reclaim desert land in Libya.

Makramallah Views Talks With IMF, Reforms

NC1212193389 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1647 GMT 12 Dec 89

[Text] Cairo, 12 Dec (MENA)—Dr Maurice Makramallah, minister of state for international cooperation, has said that Egypt's talks with the IMF are continuing so that differences of opinion between them over the way to tackle problems concerning interest and exchange rates may be resolved.

In a statement made today, Dr Makramallah said that the Egyptian Government is eager to redress certain flaws in the Egyptian economy, particularly concerning the need to reduce the deficit in the general state budget. This deficit is expected to be 10 percent of the total budget in 1990, while it is currently 12.2 percent, he noted.

Dr Makramallah said that the recent economic measures Egypt has taken have won the appreciation of international organizations. This is particularly true concerning reducing the budget deficit and the move toward establishing a unified exchange rate in relation to the dollar.

3d Installment of Remittances Received From Iraq

JN1312190589 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 11 Dec 89 p 1

[Text] The third installment of the delayed remittances of Egyptian workers in Iraq arrived yesterday. This is what Sa'd 'Abd-al-Raziq, director of the al-Rafidayn Bank in Cairo, has stated. He said that the bank is still paying out the remittances of November 1988. Muhammad al-Asfar, general manager of the Alexandria Bank, in turn stated that he received notice of the arrival of $2.2 million at his bank today and that the bank is paying out the remittances of the al-Rafidayn Bank up to 19 October 1988, and those of the al-Rashid Bank up to March 1989. The Arab-African Bank today will receive $1 million. The bank has started paying the remittances of the al-Rashid Bank up to 1 May 1989.

Transfer of Arab League Headquarters Proposed

LD1412115889 Kuwait KUNA in English 1049 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Text] Kuwait, Dec 14 (KUNA)—Egypt is to call for an Arab summit to consider re-transferring of the Arab League headquarters from Tunis to Egypt, reported a Kuwaiti daily.

AL-QABAS daily Thursday quoted what it described as high ranking Arab sources as saying Egypt would suggest the holding of an extraordinary summit early next year or bringing the issue at the regular summit scheduled for Feburary 1990.

It quoted the sources as saying the Egyptian leadership prefers adoption of a decision in this regard or simultaneously with the beginning of the Palestinian-Israeli dialogue which Egypt is hoping to host.

The sources indicated that the Egyptian move was meant to lending indirect Arab approval to the expected dialogue.

The unidentified sources said Egypt was currently exerting contacts with Arab leaders to secure the moving of the Arab League headquarters to the port city of Alexandria as Arab leaders would oppose re-seating it in Cairo, the venue of Israel's Embassy.

Editorial on Shamir's Remarks on Jordan

JN1312163589 Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 11 Dec 89 p 6

[Editorial: "Shamir ... Swimming Against the Current"]

[Text] At a time when there is optimism around the world about getting the peace process in the Middle East moving forward, one abnormal voice rises above the rest: that of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir, who claims that Jordan is Palestine in an attempt to kill the peace efforts, return the cause to the zero point, and kill off everything the international community has managed to achieve so far down the path of peace.

Shamir's statements come while preparations are under way to hold a three-way meeting of the foreign ministers of Egypt, the United States, and Israel, after the sides agreed to Baker's five points. These points place the idea of elections in the occupied territories in the correct perspective as one step down the road of realizing comprehensive and just peace in the Middle East.

Therefore, Shamir's words caused angry reaction at all levels because they harm Israeli society itself, a large part of which has become convinced of the serious Palestinian effort for peace and demanded negotiations with the PLO to realize that peace after they themselves felt the force of the intifadah in the occupied territories, the justness of the Palestinian demands, and their right to establish an independent state according to the UN resolutions.

It seems that Shamir will continue to insist on swimming against the current, against justice and fairness. However, the trend of history affirms the reverse of what the Israeli prime minister believes. The time will come when Shamir will be forced to comprehend the lessons of history. Eventually, only correct things last eternally.

Columnist on Normalization of Israeli Relations

JN1312172489 Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 11 Dec 89 p 3

["A Word of Love" column by Muhammad al-Hayawan]

[Text] The textile workers union has not adopted a new position, has not violated the law, and has not behaved abnormally. It behaved naturally. The union has decided against the normalization of relations with Israel before a comprehensive solution takes place. This is natural behavior. But Israel did not like this behavior. It insists

on normalization because Jews usually are insistent. But firm and normal positions are not affected by insistence.

Ever since we signed the peace treaty with Israel, the Israelis have been interpreting the treaty their own way. We view the treaty as peace, not reconciliation. It is an instrument to end the state of war, and we believe that normalization is linked to a comprehensive solution. The union's decision has been echoed by the workers, sports, professional and arts unions. Colleague Nasif Salim receives an invitation each week to play with Israeli volleyball teams, but he always tells them matches will be in Jerusalem after it is liberated. However, Israeli insistence continues, although they know Egypt's popular position is firm.

Israel shows no shame when it says it wants Egyptian tourists to visit Israel, although logic does not allow such visits. If the Egyptians want to make a tour, and they can choose the country they want to visit, they certainly will choose Tunisia, Morocco, Cyprus, Greece, or Syria and Lebanon when stability prevails in them; there is no reason for them to choose Israel.

Because of its odious nature, Israel does not believe Egypt has a free press, and that freedom of the Egyptian press is insisted upon. Israel allows its newspapers to attack Egypt, then protests and complains to the United States when the Egyptian press writes frankly about what is taking place in the occupied territories.

Israel and 120 other countries have embassies in Cairo. But Israel wants a special status for its embassy, as if it were preferred over the others. Israel also claims the Egyptian Government prevents Egyptians from visiting the country. This is absurd, because Egyptians have not yet digested the peace treaty and refuse to shake Israeli hands, which are stained with the blood of the children of the stones. How can any Egyptian maintain relations with Israel when it occupies Golan, southern Lebanon, the West Bank, Gaza, and Jerusalem, and kills the Arabs, never mind the 30 years of war, betrayal, killing, and never mind Dayr Yasin, Kufr Qasim, Abu Za'bal, Bahr al-Baqar, Sabra, and Shatila?

RCC Member Jallud on Transfer of Dues

NC1312115289 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1230 GMT 13 Dec 89

[Text] Sirte, Libya, 13 Dec (MENA)—Speaking to Egyptian journalists who accompanied President Mubarak on his visit to Libya yesterday, Major 'Abd-al-Salam Jallud, member of the Libyan Revolution Command Council, asserted that instructions have already been given to settle the issue of Egyptian workers dues, which will be transferred immediately.

Major Jallud said that Libya places Egyptian, Sudanese, and Moroccan labor at the top of foreign workers who are welcome in Libya.

He remarked that the coming years will witness a significant development in the size of Egyptian labor in Libya, so that their numbers will return to what they had been before severing relations.

Libya

Authorities Ban French Ships From Ports

LD1412112889 Paris Domestic Service in French 0638 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Text] For the past week Libya has banned access to its ports by all ships from France. The decision was announced by the maritime authorities but it has not been officially announced to the French Government. At the moment the reason for this ban is not known.

JANA Reports Al-Qadhdhafi News Conference

LD1412155989 Tripoli JANA in English 1440 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Text] Tripoli, Al-Kanun [December] 14, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi the leader of the Great al-Fatih Revolution announced that he has reviewed with President Muhammad Husni Mubarak of the Arab Republic of Egypt, during his meeting with him at the Gulf of Sidon municipality on Tuesday, many Arab, African and international issues apart from matters of joint cooperation and coordination between the two countries in the industrial and agricultural fields.

The leader of the revolution told the press delegation accompanying President Mubarak and the PAN-AFRICA NEWS AGENCY (PANA) that of the priorities he had discussed with President Mubarak were the coordination of both countries' efforts in the fields of agriculture and industry and the easing of movement for the sons of the one Arab people and to remove all those obstacles erected during the black years.

The leader asserted that there was a supreme Arab interest "which abides us to have a certain amount of coordination.... We in Great Jamahiriyah do not want to overtake and surpass the supreme interest of the Arab nation. And apart from that certainly there is difference between the two countries.... There are diligencies, points of views and political legacies from past years we cannot say that we agree in them, but facing the supreme interest of the Arab nation and facing the astonishing transformations in the world, there are limits we agree on." [sentence as received]

And on the Arab Palestine issue, the leader announced that there were not developments in this matter. He said "the Arabs had expressed peace twice collectively without the attendance of Great Jamahiriyah.... One time in Fes and one time in Casablanca this is apart from the peaceful initiatives of Yasir 'Arafat described by some Palestinians even as stepping down, treason and going to extremes." The leader added saying "despite all

this the truthfulness of all the Arab peaceful stances had no effect and it seems that the other side does not want peace.... We say peace and they don't say peace. And this is the problem."

Responding to a question on the coordination between Egypt and Great Jamahiriyah and the reflection of that on Great Jamahiriyah's participation in the Arab-European dialogue the leader said "this question was debated by the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation and is still under discussion and study.... Egypt is working towards convincing Great Jamahiriyah to take part in such dialogue because it is an important state on the Mediterranean and should not abandon such dialogue.... But there is a point of view which is: The dialogue is not balanced, for (?we) are facing an industrial power which has a strategic programme and the whole world realizes that in 1992 Europe will be united politically and economically."

The leader explained to the journalists accompanying President Mubarak that that meant that European leaders and nations have strategic programme they are following and is backed by huge potentials and in it there is seriousness and clarity.... While the Arab side had not agreed yet on a political and economic Arab strategy for the year 1992.

And on the conflict in Lebanon and Great Jamahiriyah's stance from that the leader explained that he personally does not involve himself in politics but in the revolution.... He indicated that what is happening in the (?area) there is a factional conflict fueled by the Israelis and the West and will remain so to bleed Syria and to create another Palestine and another alternative to create a continuous bleeding.

The leader once more declared that he did not believe in factions and did not believe that so and so is a Muslim and so and so are Christians, for all are Arabs.

The leader of the revolution asserted that the resolving of the Lebanese dilemma lies in the establishment of people's congresses, people's committees and the establishment of the jamahiri regime when the government will be abolished and the president will be abolished and ministerial and the diplomatic portofilos will be abolished.... He explained that the jamahiri regime people of any faction will never fight in. [sentence as received]

The leader of the revolution (?has) said that he has taken stock with President Mubarak, currently chairman of the Organization of African Unity, the question of Chad. He says that he has raised this question and the stance assumed by France as well as the the intervention of the foreign troops in Chad. He says that he has found President Mubarak highly appreciates the stand taken by Great al-Jamahiriyah vis-a-vis Chad as Libya has released the Chadian prisoners and has announced the solution of its differences in amicable ways with Chad. Libya has also recognized the existing government in N'djamena even though it doesn't merit this recognition being tribal and is protected by foreign troops.

The leader adds that notwithstanding this, Great al-Jamahiriyah has recognized the present situation and has left the question to the Chadians.

He has stressed to the pressmen accompanying President Mubarak that the conflict in Chad has become Chadian-Chadian. Despite this, the Chadian Government has not shown any flexibility to solve any problem amicably within or without. Such is the government of Habre as he wants to rule supreme in Chad in which there are 500 tribes. As such, no single tribe can rule it.

The leader has reiterated that Great al-Jamahiriyah supports the national unity in Chad and has announced its amicable stances towards this African country which is a neighbour, apart from announcing its non-interference in its internal affairs.

The leader says it is regrettable we still hear the name of Great al-Jamahiriyah aired in the Chadian problem by the Government of N'djamena in a bid to get the compassion of the French troops so as to intervene and support the government of N'djamena or still in a bid to get aid.

The leader points out that this is an immoral act apart from being malicious. President Mubarak appreciates the stands of Great al-Jamahiriyah towards Chad. Being the chairman of the Organization of African Unity, President Mubarak has been asked by us to set up a committee to visit the border of Chad with Sudan to make sure that the conflict raging now in Chad is Chadian-Chadian and that there is no presence whatsoever of the so-called the Islamic Legion. This has been confirmed by the Sudanese Government. We have asked President Mubarak to send this committee to have first hand experience whether this legion is in existence. The legion. The myth. Or the alleged Libyan presence.

The leader has expressed his surprise at the airing of the name of Libya in this question. This shows that N'djamena doesn't want a solution to these problems. Like the Israelis, Chad lives only on war.

The leader has reiterated that Great Al-Jamahiriyah has put forward a proposal of the Arab union to the summit held in Casablanca and was approved by the Arab presidents and kings.

During his meeting with the pressmen accompanying President Mubarak, the leader points out that this unionist proposal suggests that the council of Arab summit be changed to the Council of the Presidium of the Union and meet annually. Its chairmanship is to be in turn, whilst specialized committees be set up to bring life to all the agreements of the Arab League. These agreements are frozen now. They include the joint Arab market and other things that are far better than the agreements among the European countries.

The leader points out that this union includes the way for unifying the networks of gas, electricity, the corps project, the projects of food-stuff self-sufficiency at the

Arab level and a unionist commission for scientific research and another one for water. All of these come within the purview politically where Arab groupings get together.

Speaking of the dimensions of the future relations between Great Jamahiriyah and Egypt, the leader says that any genuine person keen on the future raises this question adding: We work according to our intentions and orientations as well as our preparedness. I see that brotherly President Mubarak and brotherly Egyptians have a serious will to work and achieve unity, apart from building a modern economic force. We, on our side, are serious. No one can place pressure on us within or without to tell us not to cooperate with Egypt or Tunisia.

He stresses that we have have paid the price of our freedom and independence. The price has been crystallized into raids on our homes and victims. As such, we are independent in passing our resolution. He adds we believe that Egypt is more priceless to be affected by any other side.

He points out that according to this analysis, we have closed ranks to build the future with God's help.

Speaking of the Afro-Arab cooperation, the leader [word indistinct] that there exists a Zionist scheme aiming at infiltating into Africa to wreck the Arabs. He points out that the problems in southern Mauritania, southern Libya and southern Sudan and those that might appear in southern Algeria are concocted by a Zionist machination supported by the Western force entered into alliance with the enemy in a bid to harness and place pressure on the Arab nation from the south. This scheme might march on the Arab nation from the south. This is called by them 'Niyaniya' meaning a poisonous insect. This scheme aims at bringing in a poisonous insect in the Arab homeland so as it nips this homeland from its outskirts.

He warns against this Zionist scheme aiming at wrecking the Afro-Arab cooperation pointing out to the recognition by Ethiopia of the Zionist enemy. This recognition comes within the purview of the Zionist conspiracy to wreck the Afro-Arab cooperation.

Speaking on the situation in southern Sudan, the leader has said to the press delegation accompanying President Mubarak that southern Sudan, Ethiopia, the African Horn and Uganda are all regions where the Zionist interests concentrate. They are targetted by the Zionist scheme which is strategic in a bid to control the sources of the Nile.

He points out that for a long time the Zionists have endeavoured to enable their oncoming generations to place their hands on the sources of the Nile through establishing pro-Zionist governments in southern Sudan, Ethiopia and the African Horn at the Bab al-Mandib [name as received] Gate in Uganda where there is Victoria Lake. All of this aims at strangling Egypt in future when confrontation takes place within one or two generations.

He points out that their stand is alongside Mengistu in Ethiopia and alongside John Garang in southern Sudan and others. Their continuing work is to (?isolate) southern Sudan comes within the purview of posing these countries to become pro-Zionist in future.

He says that the Zionists have worked a lot during the office of Milton Obote in Uganda. We felt this ourselves when he was toppled by Amin. We found how the Zionist presence in Uganda aimed at controlling it in its entirety in that it represented the main source of the Nile.

He has stressed that the Arab-Zionist conflict is strategic and dangerous as Zionism aims at controlling the sources of the Nile. Its objective by this is Egypt, not Sudan, Uganda or Ethiopia.

He has reconfirmed that the question of indebtedness has become international occupying the mind of the world at large. This question has not occupied (?our minds) a lot especially Great al- Jamahiriyah is not concerned in this question because it is a creditor not debtor country. A number of Arab, African and Latin American countries as well as East European countries are indebted to it.

Speaking of the stand of the Soviet Union and the United States towards German unity, the leader points out that to reply to this question needs lengthy lectures. These lectures could be given in one of the Egyptian universities.

He adds briefly that arrangements following the Second World War have cracked up. As such, anything after this war has started to crack up and become subject to reconsideration.

Speaking of the Egyptian-Syrian rapprochement, he says that Great al-Jamahiriyah encourages this reconciliation between these two countries.

Commenting on the absence of interest by both East and West in the questions of destiny pertaining to the Arab nation, he points out to the pressmen that when there emerges a danger against the Israelis their attention becomes great, but when the Arabs are subjected to danger, they disregard this and try to forget it.

Mauritania

Taya Urges 'Peaceful' Solution With Senegal

AB1312133889 Nouakchott Domestic Service in French 1430 GMT 12 Dec 89

[Excerpts] Our people today celebrated the 5th anniversary of the restructuring movement with enthusiasm and confidence in the country's future. The festivities that marked the day were launched by Colonel Maaouiya

Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya, chairman of the Military Committee for National Salvation [CMSN] and head of state, with a flag-raising ceremony at the Presidential Palace. CMSN, cabinet, and diplomatic corps members as well as top officials and senior officers of the armed and security forces were present. [passage omitted]

In his address to the nation, the head of state took stock of the most significant achievements during the year and also touched on the prospects for the nation in the financial, social, economic, and cultural sectors. He then recalled the basic principles of Mauritania's foreign policy and the ordeal that our people courageously faced this year; namely, the Mauritanian-Senegalese conflict. Alpha Sang Ide has the translation of the address:

[Begin recording] Dear fellow countrymen, the celebration of the 5th anniversary of the 12 December restructuring movement gives me the opportunity to address you, fully confident in the future of our country. [passage omitted]

At the end of this 1st year of the basic economic development program, economic growth will reach on actual rate of 3.5 percent through the joint contributions of the three main sectors of the national economy. Concerning public finance, the results achieved concerning income and expenditure have corresponded to the objectives set by the financial program. In the monetary sector, the credit and currency situation has improved in accordance with the policy adopted since the launching of the financial and economic recovery program. Export revenue this year will increase by 1.713 billion [currency not specified]. [passage omitted]

Concerning the management of public funds, state control will continue as in the past; namely, to fulfill the instilling of ethics into public life and to ensure greater respect for everyone's interest.

Dear fellow countrymen, these successes in the various sectors of our economy will be significant only if they are supported by concrete actions likely to contribute to the improvement of the general conditions of our people. [passage omitted]

Throughout this year, the Food Security Commissioner has continued to assist some of our fellow countrymen through the generous aid of friendly countries, international bodies, and nongovernmental organizations. On this occasion, I express my sincere gratitude to all these countries and bodies; namely, the United States, the FRG, France, Italy, Japan, Spain, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The rest are the commission of the European Communities, the World Food Program, the UN Development Program, and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization. [passage omitted]

Concerning international relations and in the subregion, the Arab Maghreb Union was created this year.

On the international scene, we have been constantly loyal to the principle guiding our stands on current issues. Concerning Palestine, we reaffirm our unflinching support for the just cause of the Palestinian people under the leadership of their unique and legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization, as well as for the right of their state to achieve sovereignty and the independence of their territory.

Concerning Namibia, we express our satisfaction with the setting up of a constituent assembly, which constitutes the first step toward the independence of this territory. We hope that the wind of freedom blowing on this part of Africa will restore equal rights among the southern African people and put an end to the apartheid system.

Eastern Europe is going through extremely significant changes, and it is important to follow the situation and any related developments and to meditate over their significance. We congratulate these countries for their sense of overture and rapprochement, which will contribute to the solution of conflict throughout the world.

In the face of these changes which characterize a world increasingly moving toward peace and dialogue, the (?anachronistic) government in power in Dakar has found nothing better than to create a serious dispute between Senegal and Mauritania. After the April events and the confusion created by the misleading propaganda of Dakar, the international community has now realized that our stand and cause were just.

The Islamic Republic of Mauritania reiterates its desire to seek a peaceful and equitable solution to its conflict with Senegal. I take this opportunity to pay a deserved tribute to our people, who showed their solidarity with their countrymen repatriated from Senegal, and their ability to overcome severe hardships and face any ordeal. [passage omitted]

It is worth reiterating the strong desire of the national leadership to continue the democratic process despite our decision a few months ago to extend the term of office of the municipal councils and mass education organization. [end recording]

Romanian Food Industry Minister Arrives on Visit

AB0912094089 Nouakchott Domestic Service in French 1430 GMT 8 Dec 89

[Text] Romanian Food Industry Minister Paula Prioteasa arrived yesterday evening in Nouakchott, where she was welcomed by Colonel Mohammed Sidina Ould Sidya, minister of fisheries and maritime economy. She told the MAURITANIAN PRESS AGENCY that her visit to Mauritania is in line with the desire expressed by the Mauritanian and Romanian heads of state that the two countries' officials meet as often as possible to exchange views on issues of common interest. The Romanian minister also stressed the excellent cooperation between the two countries and mentioned the joint venture Simar Company [Mauritania-Romania Industrial Company for

the Development and Exploitation of Water Resources] as the best example of this cooperation.

The minister noted laudable efforts being made by the Mauritanian people and Government for the socioeconomic development of the country. In conclusion, Minister Prioteasa stated that the Romanian people and Government will spare no efforts to consolidate and diversify the cooperation existing between Nouakcott and Bucharest.

Departs 11 December

AB1212104589 Nouakchott Domestic Service in French 1430 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] Romanian Food Industry Minister Paula Prioteasa left Nouakchott early this morning. She was seen off by Colonel Mohamed Sidina Ould Sidya, minister of fisheries and maritime economy.

The Romanian minister was received by the head of state and also held discussions with her Mauritanian counterpart. These discussions enabled the two ministers to take stock of bilateral cooperation in the sector of fisheries and to examine ways and means to strengthen and diversify it in accordance with the two leaders' desires.

Military Committee Reduces Prison Sentences

LD1112220689 Nouakchott Domestic Service in Arabic 2030 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] The Military Committee for National Salvation has stated that in accordance with a decree issued today, it has been decided to reduce the prison sentence by 1 year for all those convicted of harming the internal or external security of the state or of participating in an illegal organization.

Sudan

Al-Bashir Alleges Israel Seeks Red Sea Base

EA1212152589 Khartoum SUNA in French 0930 GMT 12 Dec 89

[Excerpt] Abu Dhabi, 12 Dec—General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, National Salvation Revolution Command Council [NSRCC] chairman, has warned Arab countries against the dangers posed by Israel's presence in the Red Sea region. At a news conference yesterday in Abu Dhabi, Gen al-Bashir referred to the reestablishment of diplomatic relations between Ethiopia and Israel and asserted that the Israeli presence in the region was a threat not only to Sudan but equally to other Arab states with Red Sea shores and to the Gulf states, whose goods are moved through the Red Sea.

Gen al-Bashir indicated that Israel was trying to establish a military base on an Ethiopian island in the Bab al-Mandab Straits, and this threatens security in the Red Sea. In this spirit, the NSRCC chairman called on the Arab countries to assume their responsibility for the defense of the Arab nation.

Referring to the Sudanese Government's efforts to achieve peace in southern Sudan, Gen al-Bashir confirmed that "the door to dialogue remains open in spite of the breakdown of the recent negotiations with Garang's movement, held in Nairobi under the auspices of former U.S. President Jimmy Carter. Peace constitutes the first and best choice, since the continuation of the war will exhaust the country's resources, which should go to development," he continued. [passage omitted]

Al-Bashir Comments on South Problem, Arab Ties

PM1312132589 Muscat 'UMAN in Arabic 7 Dec 89 p 17

[Excerpts] Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, chairman of the National Salvation Revolution Command Council in fraternal Sudan, held a news conference at the end of his 2-day official visit to the Sultanate.

His excellency praised the good results produced by his important talks with His Majesty Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id, commending his majesty's position and support.

His excellency broached the situation in Sudan, the efforts being made to establish peace in southern Sudan, and his country's relations with Arab and foreign states. [passage omitted]

'Umar al-Bashir said that another round of negotiations had been held in Nairobi but had regrettably ended yesterday with no agreement reached by the participants. It was clear that the movement's delegation did not have powers and the movement was not free to make decisions—which proves that there is foreign influence or control over the movement to prevent an agreement from being reached. I mentioned here Ethiopia in particular, because it sees itself as entitled to barter the southern Sudan issue against the Eritrean issue and so is obstructing a solution to the southern Sudan problem as long as the Eritrean problem exists.

He added that the movement leaders read and praised the recommendations, but during the negotiations they failed to reach an agreement with us. [passage omitted]

Asked about the Salvation Revolution's obstruction of party life at a time when the world is being swept by a wave of reform to expand popular participation and about whether there are formulas for political expression that would realize the Sudanese people's aspirations, his excellency said that the Sudanese people love freedom and democracy. And party politics had gone through three stages: The first after independence, and that experiment failed; then repeated after the October revolution, but the party experiment failed to carry the country; and the third after the April uprising, when people had started to form parties but they failed. And

Sudanese citizens, including the party leaders themselves, became totally convinced that the party pluralism experiment, which we originally adopted from Britain, is a seed that cannot germinate in Sudanese soil.

So, there was a need to search for a new formula that would guarantee the Sudanese people's right to exercise democracy. We therefore decided to merge the party bases so that they could work through a unified organization as a first stage, as in the case of the people's committees, and we combined in them all the leaderships known for their honesty and sincerity among the various party grass roots. We included them in these committees, the experiment is proceeding well, and there are no differences inside these committees. [passage omitted]

Asked about the solutions proposed as alternatives to the negotiations with the rebels which failed in Nairobi, he said: The government's first option is to achieve a solution through negotiation. This is because continuation of the war means further destruction. The people killed are Sudanese and the resources drained are Sudanese, and the people are in desperate need of these resources and funds to invest in building. If the infrastructure collapses completely—no roads, schools, hospitals, or services—life in the south will have almost ended. [passage omitted]

Our first and last option is to achieve peace through negotiation. So, if this round fails, there are other rounds. And we are convinced that the peace process is not easy and that agreement will not be achieved through one meeting. There will be other rounds, and we hope that they will in the end turn to reason in order to arrive at a solution to the problem.

Asked about the reasons for the failure to apply the Arab defense pact on the grounds that the rebellion in the south is a move aimed against Sudan's Arabism, he said: What is happening in Sudan is aimed first and foremost against Sudan's identity, because Sudan is the natural crossing point for the Arab, Islamic culture. The desert forms a natural barrier between the Arab and African states, so the only outlet for communication is through Sudan. And that is the reason Sudan has been focused on. The fighting started here in 1955, before independence. The Arab defense pact is applied when there is clear foreign intervention, but what is happening in Sudan is considered merely an internal issue, despite the existence of training camps and huge supply operations, and despite obvious interference by Israel. All this prompts us to put our Arab brothers in the picture to enable them to play their role.

Asked about Sudanese-Egyptian relations and whether Egypt has a role in the peace process, 'Umar al-Bashir said: The natural thing is for Egyptian-Sudanese relations to be excellent, for reasons known to everyone. The strange thing is for there to be disputes and coolness in these relations.

Before 30 June there was coolness in relations between Egypt and Sudan and between Sudan and most of the Arab countries. And, thank God, since that time we have started to improve relations, which are now getting stronger. I can say that Sudanese-Egyptian relations are now stronger than ever before, and there is full coordination and consultations.

Egypt has a role in the peace process, because the Egyptian president is the present OAU chairman. He is playing a major role in convincing the African states of the justice of the issue raised by the government. And the Egyptian media services are directed to play a major part in explaining Sudan's viewpoint. So, we can say that Egypt is playing a full role in the peace process. And Egypt is a partner in the peace process in southern Sudan.

Asked about what prompted rebel leader John Garang to accept the negotiation principle, he said: The reason that prompted John Garang to accept that principle is the viewpoint we explained to all African states, Western Europe, the United States, and Canada. Those parties accepted it, and we persuaded them that the Sudanese viewpoint is objective. So, the rebel movement was forced to sit down and negotiate. However, it is clear that the delegation does not want to reach a solution.

Nairobi Talks Leader Khalifah News Conference

EA0712072589 Omdurman Domestic Service in Arabic 1345 GMT 6 Dec 89

[News conference with Staff Colonel Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah, member of the National Salvation Revolution Command Council and leader of the Nairobi peace talks delegation, at the Intercontinental Hotel in Nairobi on 5 December; Khalifah remarks followed by English translation; processed from Arabic except passages within slantlines processed from English translation—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Khalifah] The government delegation came to Nairobi with a comprehensive program as represented by the resolutions adopted by the national dialogue conference which convened in Khartoum from 9 September and 23 October 1989. [passage omitted]

We were surprised that the movement's delegation had not brought with it any idea or program that could lead to peace but instead insisted on procedural issues such as the abrogation of the Islamic laws, the state of emergency, and the military pacts. We explained that insisting on these aspects was tantamount to setting preconditions, whereas it had been agreed to negotiate without preconditions.

In spite of this, however, the two sides made significant progress as represented by the following:

1. They agreed that the government's peace program as represented by the recommendations of the national dialogue conference constitutes a basis for solving Sudan's problems.

2. They agreed on the convening of a conference in which the various sections of Sudan will participate to draft a permanent constitution for the country.

3. They agreed that the country's permanent constitution should be approved through a popular referendum.

4. The two sides confirmed the previous agreement to hold dialogues and to maintain direct contact between the two sides.

The Sudanese Government delegation expressed its readiness to accept most of President Jimmy Carter's proposals, but the other side rejected these proposals. The Sudanese delegation confirms its readiness to continue dialogue with the movement's delegation anywhere and at any time agreed upon by the two sides and we hope that in the next round the movement's delegation will set aside these procedural issues and attend instead with a program embracing the basic issues that have led to the conflict. /Now I will be happy to respond (?to your) questions./

[Jim Malone, Voice of America] /Jim Malone of the Voice of America: Colonel, the SPLA [Sudanese People's Liberation Army] told us this afternoon that they didn't think the Sudanese Government was serious about peace and that you people were merely here as a propaganda ploy to divert issues and problems away from your own problems back home. I would like you to respond to those accusations./

[Khalifah] We came to this conference, to this round with a comprehensive peace program, a program of how to resolve the issue of the south. The other side has accepted this program, which is constituted from the resolutions of the national dialogue. However, on their side, they had no peace program. All they had to talk about were procedural actions such as the abrogation of the shari'ah, the joint defense pacts, and lifting of the state of emergency.

[Malone] /This is a quick follow-up: The SPLA often quoted General al-Bashir saying he's going to liberate all the areas now under SPLA control. I mean, are you here to talk peace, or are you getting ready for war? You're sending out different signals. Clarify it./

[Khalifah] /The real problem is coming from SPLM [Sudanese People's Liberation Movement]-SPLA, not from Gen al-Bashir./ We agreed at the earlier round of negotiations on a cease-fire, but it was they who broke the cease-fire and occupied Kurmuk. Then, when the Sudanese Armed Forces recaptured Kurmuk and liberated it from the SPLM-SPLA, thousands of Sudanese demonstrated—500,000 Sudanese went to demonstrate in front of Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir. What do you think the commander in chief would tell them when they were rejoicing? /The statement was a military one rather than a political one./

[Unidentified correspondent] /My name is [word indistinct] from the [words indistinct] Germany. You mentioned that your delegation could agree to most of the proposals which Mr Carter made. Which were the proposals you could not agree upon, and secondly, could you think of a gesture of goodwill for the next days or weeks that you're willing to have peace in the south like Mr Carter proposed?/

[Khalifah] We agreed on most of the basic fundamental points, but we did not agree to the procedural points he advanced. We are still ready to discuss anything they want so as to reach agreement on them because we want to end this war.

[Unidentified correspondent] /[Words indistinct] follow-up on this one. You have said as far as (?concrete) proposals are concerned, are you willing to freeze shari'ah law temporarily for a couple of weeks, as Mr Carter has suggested?/

[Unidentified voice] /[Passage indistinct] As you mentioned earlier, this national dialogue's (?appeal) came with (?several conditions). Also, a committee was formed to review the existing laws so that we come with some conditions which will be consistent with the decisions of the national dialogue. [Words indistinct] this is a domestic legal issue and we would want to establish a [word indistinct] we would like those committees to come up with further conditions and then we will [word indistinct] to the constitutional conference. We believe that this issue could be handled by the constitutional conference and we see that it is not something which would prevent an immediate peace which will (?probably) [words indistinct]./

[Unidentified correspondent] /But you are not prepared to do this, is that what you are saying?/

[Unidentified voice] /What I have said is that there is a special committee constituted to handle this particular question and this special committee (?becomes a condition) and we believe that as a nation we cannot have a (?legal) [word indistinct] from any state, so unless you come with [words indistinct] will be started. The answer to the question is no./

[Unidentified voice] /Can I make a comment on this? In the first place, the way it has been phrased by Mr Jimmy Carter is not really totally acceptable, because he has reduced the whole problem of the Sudan from 1955 to 1989 as rotating around 2 weeks of suspending shari'ah laws. I don't think that's logical. This war started in 1965 up to 1983, when there was another formation of the fighting. There was no question of shari'ah whatsoever between 1965 and 1983. Shari'ah was not there. We cannot now come and say: Because these shari'ah laws were passed in 1983, then they are the real cause of the problem. They are not. They cannot be, neither logically, nor politically, nor legally, and definitely not historically.

Therefore there is something wrong with the emphasis. Mr Carter's emphasis is on the shari'ah laws. Our emphases are on the future of the law in the Sudan, not suspension of the shari'ah laws for 2 or 3 weeks.

/Therefore I believe that Mr Carter was in fact incorporating the procedural agenda of the SPLM-SPLA. It is true he has made a good effort, he has exerted a lot of energy trying to close the gap between the two parties, but his priorities are not really ours. A good grasp of the political situation in the Sudan [words indistinct] (?must) render this conflict would not [word indistinct] (?an) objective person to conclude that shari'ah did not cause the war in 1965, this shari'ah which was passed (?and reissued) in 1983. You have really to convince—you have to use hard logic to (?convince) anybody of that./

[Colin Blane, BBC] /Colin Blane from the BBC. The talks have failed. Colonel, who is to blame?/

[Khalifah] I do not believe that these talks have failed, because the other side laid down procedural points we did not agree to because they were impractical. [passage omitted]

[Unidentified correspondent] /Colonel, if I may follow up on a point that's been raised several times: You've mentioned that there's a committee which is studying this question, but your preliminary document from the Khartoum conference already makes a general recommendation on shari'ah: In Muslim majority states, Muslim law, Christians will have to follow; in Christian majority states, they can vote to be exempt, and Muslims would have to be without. [sentence as heard] That still gives time to the one sticking point which seems to be a sticking point of religious laws—Muslim law over Christian minorities, regardless of the details./

[Khalifah] No, I do not think that the premises of your question are totally accurate.

[Unidentified correspondent] /(?It is) totally accurate. [passage indistinct]/

[Unidentified voice] /I want to answer, and he wants to answer you, but I can answer the question. You see, the recommendations of the national dialogue conference related to the whole relationship of the state and religion. That relationship of the state and religion includes the whole question of legislation (?of) [words indistinct] that legislation, the hot potato is the 1983 criminal shari'ah laws.

/So, whereas we are trying to formulate, and we have formulated a complete program based on federalism to govern the Sudan with specific provisions on how to proceed with our legislature. Till that's implemented, what happens? At the same time we sit, notwithstanding this, we are going to revise all these laws, and that is an integral part of the recommendations—that all current laws in the Sudan, especially these shari'ah laws, are being revised by this highly specialized subcommittee. So, we will not be stuck with the question of suspending shari'ah for 2 weeks. We want to set a legal system for generations to come, so we should not really be criticized because we are not in agreement on the suspension of shari'ah for 2 weeks./

[Unidentified voice] /[Words indistinct] may I add also that (?what) we suggested and what was accepted by the SPLA as something constructive, we would like to take towards the constitutional conference. If they have any point of view they are absolutely welcome to come and (?state) their point of view and eventually it would be the (?move) of the Sudanese people to decide which way they go, and I guess they will also accept, as I mention here—the whole Sudanese people—so I don't see any real difficulty which will not make us come close together./

[Unidentified correspondent] /(?I am) [words indistinct]. I would like to know what's going to happen to various relief aid which has been stopped beginning in November. Will there be (?huge) corridors of tranquillity, for example?/

[Khalifah] We came to an agreement with former American President Jimmy Carter, and he has issued a statement which you have all heard. Brother Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir is going to convene a conference of all the countries concerned with relief in Khartoum. For our part, we want to provide this relief as soon as possible.

We agreed during the first round of talks in Addis Ababa that relief should be allowed to flow under the protection of the two sides. /And this is tied to a cease-fire./ Very regrettably, however, the other side violated the cease-fire, but we shall try to resolve this matter shortly at the conference on this problem.

[Unidentified correspondent] /"Operation Lifeline" was never tied to a cease-fire before, but you (?put in) a new condition. Do you mean to do that?/

[Unidentified voice] /No [words indistinct] No./

[Khalifah] /"Sudan Lifeline" was suspended temporarily because of the problems relating to the administration and the delivery of those supplies./

[Unidentified correspondent] /It was never tied to a cease-fire, and you've just said it's tied to a cease-fire./

[Unidentified voice] /He said that at the previous talks there was arrangement that food supplies should be allowed to flow freely, but this was there in August, it was related to a cease-fire. Here we never said that "Sudan Lifeline" is tied to a cease-fire. That would be a misquote [words indistinct] should be done with. [passage omitted]/

Kuwait

U.S. Compensation Should Include Iranians, Libyans

LD1512095789 Kuwait KUNA in English 0832 GMT 15 Dec 89

[Text] Kuwait, Dec 15 (KUNA)—The U.S. reported intention to compensate some families of non-Iranian passengers who were killed by the U.S. forces over the Arabian Gulf last year will not improve its disgraced act, says a Kuwaiti daily.

"The memory of history will not forget the U.S. aggressions against peace and its baised false stands despite its endeavours to beautify its military operations and political attitudes," AL-RA'Y AL-'AMM wrote editorially on a front page Friday.

The paper said "if the U.S. really cares for the sentiments of the victims' families, as it always says, and wants to compensate them for their loved ones who were killed by American missiles for humanitarian reasons.... The Arab memory has not forgotten the chasing and shooting down of a Libyan plane in the 1970's by a U.S.-made Israeli jet."

"Speaking of compensations for the Iranian plane passengers, the U.S. can broaden its alleged humanitarian motives by extending them to cover the victims of the Libyan planes," the paper said.

The paper said the same thing applied to Libya regarding the massacres against the Libyans under fascist Italy.

"The U.S. and Italy can be more civilized by trying to put together its broken picture by paying the debts it owes to the Libyans, Palestinians and other Arabs," it added.

PDRY

Al-Dali Discusses Reunification, Foreign Ties

LD1412164689 Kuwait KUNA in English 1408 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Text] Kuwait, Dec 14 (KUNA)—Foreign Minister of People's Democratic Republic of Yemen [PDRY] 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Dali has said that re-unification of his country and the Yemen Arab Republic is only targetting peace and stability in the Arab region and is directed against nobody.

Al-Dali, speaking to daily AL-WATAN published here Thursday, praised the strong relations between Aden and Kuwait and the latter's unconditioned assistance to his country, describing such ties as "the model that should be followed in other Arab countries relations."

The chief diplomat indicated that the approval of the unified Yemen's Constitution by President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and Secretary General of the Yemeni Social Party 'Ali Salim al-Bid is a qualitative leap and strategic step to end division that the Yemeni people had long suffered.

On his country's joining the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC), which groups North Yemen, Iraq, Jordan and Egypt, the official said that Aden's government has no restrictions in doing so, adding that the united (?Yemen) could act as a bridge between the ACC and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

The GCC comprises Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates and Qatar.

Regarding demarcation of his country's frontiers with Saudi Arabia, he said this issue is being treated within an atmosphere of fraternal understanding and is being discussed by a joint technical committee.

About South Yemen's relations with Egypt, Al-Dali said that both countries have agreed to revive agreements that are legally valid, expecting that Egyptian Foreign Minister Dr Ismat al-Majid to visit his country soon to chair Egypt's side to the joint ministerial committee's meetings.

On Aden's relations with Washington which severed since 1969, he said despite ongong contacts in this regard the two sides have not yet agreed on resuming them.

Cairo Newspaper Interviews Al-Dali on Unity

JN1512101789 Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic 13 Dec 89 pp 2, 6

[By Yusuf al-Sharif in Aden]

[Text] Dentist 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Dali, foreign minister of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen [PDRY], has said to me: The approval of the Constitution of the state of unity by President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and 'Ali Salim al-Bid, secretary general of the Yemeni Socialist Party, is a qualitative move and a strategic step to end the Yemeni people's fragmentation, which has brought them catastrophes, civil wars, and backwardness. It is also the beginning of the establishment of the model, modern democratic state based on reconciliation and accord among different political and social forces. Furthermore, it is a source of strength for the Arabs and a step on the path of comprehensive Arab unity.

I said: What is the reaction expected to the establishment of the united Yemeni state in this vital, strategic part of the world?

He said: Yemeni unity is not directed against anyone, since it only aims to bring about peace and stability in the region. It also responds to the people's aspirations to build a developed and prosperous society. When the Yemeni people started their 26 September revolution in the north and the 14 October revolution in the south, they did not plan to stage an aggression against, or expand at the expense of anyone. They wanted to remove the obstacles of oppression, backwardness, and

isolation from which they suffered for many centuries under the rule of the imams from the house of Hamid-al-Din, and end a 129-year-old role by the British Army in our country.

I said: In spite of this, and since it was liberated, Yemen has remained a focal point for global conflicts, hegemony, and pacts.

He said: But practical signs show that Yemen—with its two parts—was saved by adhering to revolutionary principles, and by the people's and leaders' patriotic position on these plots. Therefore, it managed to take advantage of international contradictions for the benefit of their strategic line in independence and liberation, and was thus saved from falling into the trap of hegemony.

I said: It has been noticed that in the past few years, your foreign policy began to aim at ending the Arab and international isolation imposed on the PDRY. Is this due to the fact that the revolutionary experiment in the PDRY has matured, or to Arab and international developments?

He said: There was no isolation from the Arabs or from the world for us to seek to end. For example, the PDRY received 140 votes out of 157 in the UN Security Council when we were nominated for membership this year. We deal with all states according to the way they deal with us, in spite of differences in political directions which we may have with this or that state, and on the basis of their stand toward our national causes and pan-Arab aspirations. We now believe that severing ties [with Arab countries] and rapprochement with foreign countries was a mistake. Now, we have started to place at the head of our list of foreign priorities the principle of Arab neighborliness as a factor for security, stability, and cooperation. We are also giving special attention to our relations with Third World countries. Our foreign relations with socialist countries have a special place in view of their political support to our causes and financial assistance.

I said: But, it was noticed that the visit by [William] Waldegrave, minister of state at the British Foreign Office, came after the Yemeni summit in Aden approved the Constitution of the state of unity, while [Saudi Foreign Minister] Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal's visit came just before this step.

He said: This was a mere coincidence. Both visits were on the Foreign Ministry's agenda, and when we were informed of the date when the two visits will be made, we consented.

I said: Where have efforts to restore relations with the United States reached?

He said: You know we broke relations with Washington after the U.S. charge d'affaires attempted to provoke anti-coupist elements against the regime in 1969 at the Crater district. Nine years ago, efforts were made to restore relations. Senator Findley, President Carter's envoy, visited us, but our talks reached a dead end. At the beginning of this year, Washington resumed contacts through its UN representative and through our Kuwaiti brothers. We have welcomed these contacts. Four meetings have taken place so far.

I said: A joke circulating among Yemeni citizens says that the Saudi foreign minister advised you during his visit to Aden to adhere to Leninist Marxism.

Dr 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Dali, laughing, interrupted me and said: Our relations with Saudi Arabia are in the best shape one can hope for. This is the case not only with Saudi Arabia, but with all states in the region, including Oman and the Gulf states. Tension has disappeared from our relations with Iraq and the Libyan Jamahiriyah. Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal's visit to Aden enhanced the action of the joint ministerial committee.

I said: Did you raise the issue of Yemeni reunion with the Saudi foreign minister?

He said: Naturally, we raised this issue, which affects the stability of the situation and relations in the region. Unity, as I said, is against no one. I heard Prince Sa'ud welcoming the imminent reunion and expressing Saudi Arabia's readiness to support it.

I said: What about the issue of border demarcation between Yemen and Saudi Arabia?

He said: This issue will be tackled within a framework of brotherly understanding. Because it needs sufficient time, discussion of this issue has been assigned for a joint technical committee.

I said: Do you expect the USSR's perestroyka to have imminent repercussions regarding economic and military aid provided by the socialist bloc?

He said: So far, they continue to implement their agreements with us. However, we are not distant from the current international changes. We hope that under a united Yemen we will be able to rely on our own resources and capabilities.

I said: What happened to the political and security alliance among the PDRY, Ethiopia, and the Libyan Jamahiriyah?

He said: I believe it was never born. At any rate, the circumstances that called for the alliance have changed. This issue is not being discussed anymore.

I said: What is your position on Ethiopia's resumption of relations with Israel and the reports of a financial and military deal with Israel in return for Ethiopia's Falasha Jews?

He said: Ethiopia severed relations with Israel in 1967 as an expression of solidarity with the Arabs. We have no information about that deal, which we condemn. However, we ask ourselves: What assistance did we Arabs offer to Ethiopia after Mengistu and Ethiopian officials toured most Arab capitals? Why has Arab support for

and cooperation with Africa declined, with the exception of Egypt and Algeria? We feel there is a great plot to engulf the Arab homeland with racist, national, and ideological hatred.

I said: Does Aden plan to join the Arab Cooperation Council [ACC] now that Sanaa has joined it?

He said: We supported the establishment of the ACC and we did not object to Sanaa's step [to join it]. We thought it would be better if the founders were given the opportunity to shoulder the burdens of the setting-up phase, and then we will not object to joining in. The steps of Yemeni unity may speed things up, and we believe it can play the role of a link between the ACC and the Gulf Cooperation Council, and also the Moroccan unity measures. It also can add to Arab solidarity and support the Arab League.

He added: Our excellent relations with Kuwait confirm that role. Kuwait still provides us with aid without conditions.

I said: Until the day when the united Yemeni state is established, will there be coordination in foreign policy with Sanaa?

He said: Our foreign policy is identical and we have a single, uncontradicted position in international forums. We agreed with the brothers in the north that the unity state will abide by the treaties and agreements which any of the two parts is bound by.

I said: Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati visited Aden twice within 1 week. What is the truth behind what is said about a mediation by you to bring about peace in the Gulf?

He said: Things have not reached the level of carrying out a mediation. During his first visit, we discussed the horizons and improvement of bilateral relations. The second visit was to attend our independence celebrations. We informed him of the need for Iran to abide by UN Security Council Resolution 598 and the achievement of peace in the Gulf. He promised to respond to Iraq's sincere call for negotiations.

I said: Lastly, what is the nature of current relations with Cairo?

He said: Our revolutions were reflected from and influenced by the July 1952 revolution. If it were not for the immortal leader, Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir, our steps would not have accelerated toward liberation and independence, which was crowned by the blood of the Egyptian and Yemeni martyrs. Most of our political and trade union leaders and our scientific staff were educated in Egypt or by Egyptian teachers in Yemen. Although our relations with Egypt were stained in the past, the Arab, regional, and international circumstances now provide a better climate to strengthen cohesion between the two peoples and improve relations. We agreed with [Egyptian Foreign Minister] Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid to begin by reviving and implementing the expired agreements that were signed in the past. We now expect his visit to Aden to chair the joint ministerial committee to follow up on implementation and search for future, broader horizons for relations between the two countries for the benefit of the two peoples. We believe that the return of the Arab League to its normal headquarters in Cairo is stipulated in the Arab League's Charter, and is inevitable in view of Cairo's status as a meeting point for, and symbol of Arab struggle, cooperation, and unity.

YAR

Mauritanian Minister Arrives With Message

JN1312200889 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 13 Dec 89

[Text] Cheikh Ahmed Ould Baba, Mauritanian minister of foreign affairs and cooperation, arrived in Sanaa this morning on a visit to our country during which he will convey a message to brother Colonel 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, president of the Republic, commander in chief of the Armed Forces, and secretary general of the General People's Congress, from his brother Mauritanian President Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya.

The Mauritanian official explained that the message deals with the developed relations existing between the two fraternal countries and the developments in the Arab and international arenas.

On hand to receive him were brother Ahmad Luqman, minister of social affairs and labor and Standing Committee member, and a representative from the presidential protocol office.

Trade Unions Chief Meets PDRY Counterpart

EA1412113189 Aden Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 12 Dec 89

[Text] Brother Rajih Salih Naji, member of the Central Committee and general secretary of the Federation of Trade Unions, met in Sanaa today his brother Husayn Salih al-Bahlul, chairman of the General Federation of Trade Unions in the northern part of the homeland.

During the meeting the two discussed the preparation of a draft constitution for the setting up of a unified workers' federation for the labor movement in the Yemeni homeland in one single entity. The preparations came in response to the directives of the two political leaderships of the two parts of the homeland.

Reportage on 'Aziz Visit to United Nations

Holds News Conference

JN1412151389 Baghdad INA in English 1300 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Text] United Nations, Dec 14, INA—Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz, at a press conference at U.N. Headquarters yesterday, said that Iraq had welcomed mission of U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar's personal representative Jan Eliasson, and had "cooperated with him sincerely."

"We addressed through him a set of questions to the Iranian Government on the fundamental issues to the settlement in order to gain a better understanding of the Iranian position," said Mr 'Aziz in an opening statement.

He added: "We considered necessary to address the crucial issues for peace, because the 16 months of ceasefire brought us no nearer to peace than we were when the ceasefire came into effect. Those crucial issues were the matters pertaining to sovereignty, namely, the question of withdrawal and Iraq's sovereignty over Shatt al-'Arab, the elements upon which the future relations between the two countries are to be founded, the Iranian conception of peace, security and good neighbourliness with Iraq and in the region, the Iranian attitude towards the POW's, and their view on the implementation of Security Council Resolution 598 as a peace plan."

"Actually, we received no substantive clarification which indicates a serious change in the Iranian position on any one of those issues. The Iranian Government remained vague, selective and non-committal in its position on these fundamental issues for peace," Mr 'Aziz stated.

Asked again if Iraq should not exchange POW's unconditionally, Mr. 'Aziz said, "that's our position. We have been saying that the two parties have to start their repatriation of POW's immediately, without linking this question with any other question. This is the position of Iraq. We hope that the other side will take the same position and start the release of the prisoners and end their misery and plight, because this is a humanitarian issue, a humanitarian tragedy, and it involves Iraqis and Iranians as well."

"I would very much appreciate it if the other side accepts this theory so that we could start immediately the repatriation of tens of thousands of prisoners," Mr 'Aziz said.

Asked by a correspondent for the JERUSALEM POST if the Iraqi surface-to-surface missiles were not only a deterrence of a threat from Iran but also played a similar role for Israel, Mr. 'Aziz said, "when we speak of deterrence, it means you have received an attack from one side, then you deter, and make your counteroffensive. If any country in the region, or outside the region, attacks Iraq, then Iraq will have the right to defend itself against the aggression."

Asked about the Arab Tripartite Committee's visit to Baghdad to discuss the situation in Lebanon, Mr. 'Aziz said that when the ministers of the Arab Tripartite Committee visited Baghdad, he was not there because he was in New York, so he could not give details of their talks with President Saddam Husayn.

But, he added, "regarding our position on Lebanon, we would like to see Lebanon united and free of foreign occupations. If the foreign forces leave, Lebanon could be in a better situation to reach national reconciliation. I find it very difficult to understand the possibility of a national reconciliation in Lebanon with the presence of foreign forces, which have been the source of the lack of reconciliation. The presence of the Syrians, the Iranians and the Israelis in Lebanon has been a major source in the present situation which Lebanon suffers from. So how could Lebanon become healthy again when those forces are still there?" "I think the Lebanese on their side, and the Tripartite Committee on its side and according to its mandate, should find a solution to this problem, and schedule a timetable for the withdrawal of the foreign forces, alongside with the reconciliation efforts in the internal situation in Lebanon. We say those views all the time. President Husayn has made it clear in a number of statements, but at the same time, we cannot interfere in their internal problems. It is up to the Lebanese to solve the problem, and if they seek help, they have to get it from the Tripartite Committee, not from Iraq. We are not a party to that question."

"Of course, we are willing to help the committee to implement the directives given at the Casablanca summit. That's an obligation, because we participated in that summit, and are supportive of its outcome.

Asked if talks would be resumed soon, the Iraqi deputy premier and foreign minister said he had read a statement by Iranian Foreign Minister Velayati that Iran was ready to start direct talks, but that he would ask the secretary-general what Mr. Velayati meant by what he said, "because if he means the old format which we had in the past, that's nothing new, because that format was actually futile. This is not only our assessment but it is also that of the political community at the United Nations."

"If he means that he would be ready for real direct talks, I would appreciate it, and then we could agree on a date for the resumption of our talks."

Asked about the 1975 Algiers agreement regarding the Shatt al-'Arab and if Iraq considered it valid today, Mr. 'Aziz said "it is not valid in view of international law. International law doesn't say it is valid. The treaty of 1975 was harshly violated by the Iranians in 1979 and 1980. They never recognized this treaty during the conflict. They only spoke about it after the ceasefire, so they themselves killed that treaty from the first day they came to power in February 1979. And we have scores of documents which show that the Iranians do not respect that treaty. Actually, they called it a dead treaty when

they came to power, they called it the suspect treaty, and there are pronouncements made by the then-president of Iran, Bani Sadr, by Iranian diplomats, by Iranian officials, that they do not take it as a valid agreement, and they do not comply with it.

"The Iranians don't have the liberty in this world to violate agreements when they think that they are unfavourable to them, and then impose their compliance on others when they think that they are favourable to them. Agreements between nations have to be respected all the time, not on a seasonal basis. Mr Velayati himself sent a letter to the secretary-general of the United Nations in 1987. The content of that letter means that his country is not in compliance with that agreement."

Asked how the Iranians violated the treaty, Mr. 'Aziz said, "if you read the 1975 agreement, there is a set of important obligations the most important one, was non-interference in the internal affairs. Secondly, the two parties had to make all the arrangements for the security of the borders between the two countries. When the Iranians came to power in 1979, they used every means to interfere in the internal affairs of Iraq. They openly spoke about change of the government in our country. They supported openly and politically and materially the internal subversion in our country, etc., etc. So this was a grave violation of the agreement which contains a set of obligations which the two sides have to respect.

"The other part of the agreement contained the setting of the borders between Iraq and Iran. There were a number of chunks under Iranian occupation before the agreement was reached, and those chunks had to be returned to Iraq. While we were negotiating with the Shah's government to set the border pillars, then Khomeyni came to power in 1979, the Iranians kept their forces on those chunks of land. So when we came to September 1980, the Iranians were harshly interfering in the internal affairs in Iraq. They were supporting the Kurdish rebellion, and they were occupying our territory. So they killed the agreement themselves. And I have to reiterate and remind you once again that they never uttered any statement which shows that they accept that agreement throughout the whole conflict."

"The agreement of 1975 is not valid, and we have to negotiate a new agreement. We have to reach a comprehensive agreement between the two countries which establishes a full and lasting peace, based on justice."

Addresses Session on Racism

JN1412161789 Baghdad INA in English 1510 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Text] United Nations, Dec 14, INA—Iraq said that military and nuclear collaboration between Tel Aviv and Pretoria has taken new dimensions that pose a serious threat to the whole world.

Speaking to the U.N. General Assembly's 16th special session on racial discrimination, Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Miniser Mr Tariq 'Aziz warned that such a collaboration must be given top priority to forestall its grave implications.

He went on to say that South Africa's oppressive measures are similar to those of the racist Israeli measures in the Arab region. Israel has expelled the indigenous people of Palestine from their homeland and turned it into a springboard for aggression against neighbouring Arab states.

Both the Tel Aviv and Pretoria regimes are based on the same racist principle and carry on the same oppressive practices such as detention without trial, physical liquidation, expulsions and strict censorship on the media, he added.

The Iraqi foreign minister highlighted the arms cooperation between Israel and South Africa stressing that Israel is supplying South Africa with the technology of intercontinental ballistic missiles and building a factory for this purpose in return for South Africa supplying Israel with uranium to be used in manufacturing nuclear bombs.

He said that the racist regime in South Africa rejects a political settlement to the dilemma of the black people of South Africa. It has been trying to delude the world public opinion with a so-called reform plan which amounts to no more than a way out of its international isolation.

Mr 'Aziz confirmed that the South African people have rejected the elections under the present parliament which is based on racial discrimination.

The only solution to the tragedy of the South Africans lies in establishing a free democratic system that recognises the right of the majority and treats people equally without any discrimination based on race and colour, he said.

Mr 'Aziz added that the success by the world community, namely the United Nations, in securing the independence of Namibia is an encouraging sign, "we hope that Palestine will be the next independent state that would take its seat in the General Assembly soon after Namibia", he said.

The Iraqi minister reiterated Iraq's support for all international measures to impose economic sanctions on the regime in South Africa, an embargo on arms supplies to this regime or any other form of punishment. He renewed Iraq's backing to all national liberation movements' struggle for eliminating all forms of racial segregation and enabling the South African people to secure its right to self-determination.

The UN Assembly session on racial discrimination is expected to continue until today.

Returns, Makes Statement

JN1412190089 Baghdad INA in English 1745 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Text] Baghdad, Dec 14, INA—Mr. Tariq 'Aziz, deputy premier and foreign minister this evening returned here from New York where he attended the UN General Assembly session on racial discrimination.

In a statement on arrival, Mr. 'Aziz said that, while in New York, he had had two meetings with UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar during which "I expounded our position and evaluation to the results of Mr. Jan Eliasson.. I stressed Iraq's clear and principled stances which were announced following the mission of Eliasson and that elapse of 16 months since ceasefire was put into force indicates the importance of accomplishing the stage of common understanding to the provisions of Resolution 598 as stipulated by the agreement of August 8, 1988."

The Iraqi foreign minister went on saying that he had informed the UN secretary general that the Iranian side's evading commitment to the provisions of this agreement indicates having to desire to implement the resolution which is a peace plan and also to realize a lasting and comprehensive peace.

The Iranian position, he pointed out, reflects an opportunistic attitude by the other provisions of the resolution which would lead the two countries and the entire region to a lasting peace.

'Aziz further said that he had talked with the UN Secretary General and members of the Security Council clearly on the scandalous Iranian attitude towards the question of the prisoners of war, a stand contradicting with the Third Geneva Agreement which is an obligatory international agreement.

Paper Denounces U.S. Stand on Missile System

JN1312114489 Baghdad INA in English 1020 GMT 13 Dec 89

[Text] Baghdad, Dec 13, INA—AL-THAWRAH daily of Baghdad denounced the U.S. Administration stance versus Iraq's success in launching rocket al-'Abid capable of putting satellite into orbit.

The paper was surprised over the U.S. silence versus what was taking place in nuclear reactor Dimona which produces atomic bombs according to many sources including the American one.

The paper stressed that the United States had wanted to protect its interests by securing the Zionist entity's occupation of the Palestinian territories and the continuity of this occupation.

The paper referred that the key American goal was to stamp out the Palestinian surging uprising which started stirring up anxiety of the U.S. Administration.

INA Cites Newspapers on Conflicts With Iran

AL-JUMHURIYAH on Talks

JN1312114689 Baghdad INA in English 1030 GMT 13 Dec 89

[Text] Baghdad, Dec 13, INA—AL-JUMHURIYAH paper of Baghdad stressed that the direct negotiations between Iraq and Iran for implementing UN Security Council Resolution No. 598 was a substantial and pending matter.

In its article published here today, the paper said that the assertion on the necessity of the direct Iraq-Iran negotiations and direct dialogue could not be a superficial topic but a substantial one, which would unveil the Iranian stance towards the process of peace.

The paper referred to contacts made by the Iraqi and Iranian sides with the UN secretary general in New York on difficulties that block the implementation of the peace plan between both countries pursuant to the Resolution No. 598.

The paper called on Iran to offer one bonafide indication by implementing the August 8 agreement and embarking on direct negotiations with Iraq under the auspices of the UN secretary general for implementing the plan of peace according to 598.

AL-'IRAQ on POW's

JN1312115089 Baghdad INA in English 1025 GMT 13 Dec 89

[Text] Baghdad, Dec 13, INA—AL-'IRAQ paper of Baghdad urged the international community to press Iran for expediting an immediate and comprehensive swap of POW's and terminating their humanitarian agony.

In its editorial published today, the paper described Iran's intransigent attitude versus this issue as a flagrant breach to the international agreements, especially the 3rd Geneva Convention of 1949.

The paper called on the international community to adopt a decisive stance versus Iran's violations of the international conventions.

The paper confirmed that Iran's stance did not demonstrate a real desire for reaching durable and overall peace with Iraq.

The paper also stressed on Iraq's practical proposal on forming five joint committees at experts level to debate the basic items of Resolution No. 598 which would test the Iranian rulers' stances, desires and response to implement the said resolution.

Shamir 'Leaning Toward' Formula for Delegation

TA1512065189 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 15 Dec 89 p 1

[Report by political correspondent Shim'on Schiffer]

[Text] A formula enabling Palestinians deported from the territories to participate in a delegation to talks with Israel has been worked out, with the agreement of the forum of four, prior to Cabinet Secretary Elyaqim Rubinstein's departure for talks in Washington.

It has been learned that the prime minister and Minister Arens are now leaning toward adopting the formula by which any Palestinian whose name appears on the population register of Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip can be a candidate to participate in the Palestinian delegation. According to this concept, if a way is found for the deportees to return to the territories, they will be able to participate in the Palestinian delegation.

Shamir's Office Denies Report

TA1512102089 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1000 GMT 15 Dec 89

[Text] Jerusalem has reacted to a report published in YEDI'OT AHARONOT claiming that the forum of four has agreed on a formula that would permit the participation of deportees on the Palestinian delegation for negotiations. Our correspondent Arye Golan was told by the Prime Minister's Office that the prime minister's position on the matter has not changed at all. Mr Shamir is ready to allow only residents of Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza to participate in the delegation. A source in Shamir's office called the report in the newspaper, which contended that anyone whose name appears in the census of Palestinians in the territories should be allowed to be on the Palestinian delegation, a new invention.

The report in YEDI'OT AHARONOT says that the formula—which has now been denied—was consolidated in anticipation of the departure of Cabinet Secretary Elyaqim Rubinstein for preparatory talks in the United States prior to the meeting of the foreign ministers.

Prime Minister Convalesces Following Operation

TA1412185589 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1800 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir's physicians have decided that he is to remain in the hospital and rest during the coming weekend. This was learned by our health affairs correspondent 'Uzi Birman. The hospital spokeswoman said that the prime minister is feeling well, and that he received visitors during the day and proceeded with his work in his hospital room.

U.S. President George Bush today sent a get-well telegram to Prime Minister Shamir, who is hospitalized at Jerusalem Hadassah Hospital following his operation. In his cable, President Bush writes: Dear Yitzhaq, I have heard that you were recently hospitalized. Barbara and I send you our best wishes for a speedy recovery.

Peres' USSR Visit Scheduled To Begin 2 Jan

TA1412202189 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2000 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Text] Vice Prime Minister Shim'on Peres' visit to the Soviet Union has been postponed by several days at the request of his hosts, the Soviet Peace Committee. Supreme Soviet member Genrikh Borovik, Peace Committee chairman, called Jerusalem tonight and said that because of the unexpected duration of the debates in the Congress of People's Deputies, the Soviets will be unable to complete on time the technical preparations for Mr Peres' visit, which is due in 10 days.

Mr Peres' political adviser and his spokesman will leave for Moscow next week to prepare the visit, after which his economic adviser will arrive to prepare the business aspects. The visit will begin on 2 January 1990.

'Reservations' Expressed Concerning GDR Ties

TA1512085689 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 15 Dec 89 p A1

[Report by Gid'on Alon and news agencies]

[Excerpt] Officials in the Prime Minister's Office and the Foreign Ministry yesterday expressed reservations over declarations made by public figures in the GDR about the establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel.

An official in the Prime Minister's Office said last night: "Before we set up diplomatic ties with the GDR, it must recognize its responsibility for the Holocaust and work out financial compensation for survivors."

[Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew on 15 December in a report on page A1 by East Berlin correspondent Inge Deutschkron reports: "It is possible that diplomatic relations with Israel will be established in the new year, a minister in the GDR Government told MA'ARIV yesterday. Kurt Singhuber, minister of Ore Mining, Metallurgy, and Potash in the East Berlin government, told MA'ARIV that the establishment of relations with Israel has been discussed at the highest government levels."]

Political sources in Jerusalem last night expressed great optimism about the resumption of relations with the CSSR. According to reports transmitted to the Foreign Ministry by Mordekhay Paltzur, the head of the Israel Interests Office in Warsaw who visited Prague this week and met with the head of the CSSR Foreign Ministry, it appears that the Czechoslovaks are interested in renewing tourism, air, trade, and cultural ties with Israel as a first stage. [passage omitted]

Gordon Gets First Permanent Moscow Appointment

TA1412112589 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 14 Dec 89 p 4

[Text] Meron Gordon, who was head of the first Israeli consular team in Moscow in 1988, has been appointed an adviser to the Israeli consular delegation there. This is the first official, permanent appointment to the delegation in Moscow.

Gordon, who until now has been cultural and science attache at the Israel Embassy in Rome, will be in charge of cultural and scientific relations and the exchange of delegations, and will serve as deputy to Arye Levin, the head of the mission.

The six members of the Israeli delegation in Moscow have been working overtime due to the growing wave of emigration from the USSR.

USSR's Krasova on Foreign, Domestic Issues

TA0812140289 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 8 Dec 89 p 13

[Interview with Dr Tatyana Krasova, head of the Israeli desk at the Soviet Academy of Sciences' Institute for Oriental Studies, by Tzvi Goren; date and place not given]

[Text] [Goren] How do you perceive the linkage between the establishment of Israeli-Soviet diplomatic relations and peace negotiations?

[Krasova] Being a researcher and a specialist, I am interested in the establishment of diplomatic relations, but I think that the main issue at the moment is to open negotiations in a bid to move the peace process along. The question of an international conference is still on the agenda, but the sides—two sides or all the sides—must make up their own mind whether they want to hold such a conference or not. They must decide whether an international conference—be it for organizational or political reasons, or the question of who will participate—is better or not. This is also the Soviet position: that the conference is not the end, merely the means. The Soviet Union is prepared to take part in such a process. But today the most complicated problem is how to launch the process. I hope the resumption of relations and the peace process take place simultaneously and succeed, but I realize that this will be a long and tough process. It could not be solved yesterday, and it cannot be solved today or even tomorrov.

[Goren] You were in Israel when the Berlin Wall crumbled down. How did you feel?

[Krasova] It was a surprise and I was astonished, but I do not think it was a mere coincidence. This is a new development in the world. If that is what the German people want, let them be.

[Goren] How do you explain this outburst after the long years of quiet in East Germany?

[Krasova] I do not know what the reasons were in East Germany, but the same thing happened in the Soviet Union. Most of the population kept quiet for a long time, but within a year everything changed. These days when you walk in downtown Moscow you see the streets are crowded. Demonstrations, rallies, and arguments are daily events now, but 1 or 2 years ago the streets used to be empty. Nobody argued or discussed anything.

[Goren] Is this a temporary situation or....

[Krasova] I cannot predict anything. We have a very popular saying these days: "Whatever is not forbidden is permitted."

[Goren] Do you foresee the enforcement of a multiparty system in the Soviet Union?

[Krasova] Not at the moment. I know about some unofficial trends toward recognizing the existence of factions within the party. That may happen, but I do not know when and how. I think the next CPSU congress will be decisive and will introduce new approaches.

[Goren] Would you recommend a move to a multiparty system?

[Krasova] Certainly not. We have our own order and we are trying to work things out in our own way. Such a move may or may not take place in the distant future, but it is still good to analyze the principles and methods used in a multiparty system. You share a long-standing problem with us: the pressure exerted by the party institutions on the rank and file, and the gap between the latter and the leadership. That is why it is good to understand why even multiparty systems experience the same difficulties we do, although we have only one party. This is a fundamental problem.

[Goren] You are an academic....

[Krasova] And a communist. I am a "young" party member. I joined only 6 months ago.

[Goren] Was that your reaction to developments in the USSR?

[Krasova] Partly, but I think the CPSU is now the only organization where I can play the political role I want for the sake of change and perestroyka. I am a politologist [politologit], and politology [politologya] currently plays an active role in our country. We are trying to analyze what is happening in the Soviet Union and other countries, such as Israel. I, for one, have been analyzing the multiparty system, how the democratic mechanism works, and so forth.

[Goren] To what extent do events in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe affect each other?

[Krasova] There definitely is a mutual impact, like with mirrors. I think that the changes in the Soviet Union

helped bring about change in Eastern Europe, and vice versa. We in the Soviet Union realized that our model for socialism is not universal and that each country is entitled to develop its own socialist model. I think this process will enrich theoretical and practical socialism.

[Goren] The word communist is being replaced by the word socialist these days....

[Krasova] It is a question of tradition. Lenin was a communist, and social justice may become the humanitarian ideal of the future. We have been calling it communism. So why should we call it differently now? We have tired of the socialist and communist models which we were forced to accept as the classical model, and now we are turning to a new meaning of socialism. Even you in Israel struggle for socialism and its humanitarian goals.

[Goren] Are you not being pessimistic?

[Krasova] Not at all. I understand and am aware of the difficulties, but, just like you, we are struggling.

[Goren] What do you think is the USSR's main problem?

[Krasova] The economy, definitely.

[Goren] What is the solution?

[Krasova] Two things mainly: to create a free market and a new system of land ownership based on leasing. A plan to this effect has been meticulously drafted by Leonid Abalkin, deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, and his colleagues. Nevertheless, many obstacles remain. To the best of my knowledge, there are vast areas of government-owned land and of land owned by the cooperatives. The Supreme Soviet is scheduled to approve the legal clauses dealing with land ownership.

[Goren] Looking at Gorbachev from the outside, impressions are mixed: He is good for the West, but people in the Soviet Union are not pleased with him.

[Krasova] I am not sure about that. Gorbachev is not only the symbol of perestroyka, but also the leader of groups that want perestroyka and are willing and able to work for it as necessary. This applies to the population's mainstream, which realizes that extremism is dangerous for us. That is why I think Gorbachev is the only leader we need.

[Goren] Where does his strength lie? How did they come upon him 5 years ago when the Politburo suddenly chose him?

[Krasova] We knew him in Moscow. He was popular then, and I knew that he was a very serious man who knew how, when, and what to do. Maybe he was not known throughout the Soviet Union, but he was known in Moscow.

[Goren] Is there any danger to his continued rule or his policy?

[Krasova] I do not know. The main danger is economic hardship, but I do not think it will lead to a coup. That is impossible.

[Goren] Is a return to the previous situation possible?

[Krasova] No, perestroyka will stay. Nobody wants to live like in the past, not even the reactionaries and the extremists. No—except, perhaps, for small Stalinist circles who are also referring to their own version of perestroyka.

[Goren] The change in foreign policy was more successful than in the economy....

[Krasova] Yes, but it is connected.

[Goren] How was it accepted?

[Krasova] It is a good example of the new thinking. Reorganization of international relations is the basis for Gorbachev's new foreign policy not only toward Europe and regional conflicts, but also toward the United States. Brezhnev and Nixon's detente failed....

[Goren] Why?

[Krasova] Partly because Brezhnev and some U.S. circles believed that the main trend in the world was the confrontation between the two superpowers and that the world was divided between two camps—pro-Soviet and pro-American. You here in your region know even better than I that the change from the balance of terror to a balance of interests is a positive move.

[Goren] Do you see a totally new USSR in 10 years time?

[Krasova] I do not know. I am sure that a solution to the economic problems will solve the national problem. The Supreme Soviet has just given economic independence to the Baltic republics, and first they have to experiment. It might not be necessary to break up our unity; perhaps it will even be better to keep it and develop a new approach to economic independence.

[Goren] But not political independence?

[Krasova] I cannot imagine that. I cannot foresee that.

[Goren] Can you foresee the disbandment of the Warsaw Pact?

[Krasova] I think that will happen soon, but it will not be easy for the East European countries to become part of West Europe. It is possible that a new relationship of cooperation between the USSR and East Europe will develop.

[Goren] How would you define the current situation in Europe toward the end of the 20th century?

[Krasova] It is difficult. Perhaps it is a new stage in European history.... People are searching for their own way to live in free and democratic societies. There are several ideas and approaches. There are cultural differences, but the aims are freedom, democracy, and a high

standard of living. They will be able to find the balance between freedom and ecology, between a market economy and a planned one, between cultural differences and joint approaches and aims. It will be a new page in history. I do not know how to define it—perhaps neosocialism or a new society—but the name is not important.

Foreign Ministry Warns Against 'PLO Campaign'

TA1512100589 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 15 Dec 89 p 16

[Report by diplomatic correspondent Menham Shalev]

[Text] The Foreign Ministry has warned embassies and consulates abroad of a PLO campaign to set up ties with Jewish communities in the U.S. and Western Europe.

The ministry directive cites the London-based Saudi weekly AL-MAJALLAH, which reported this week that the PLO had adopted proposals of leading Palestinians abroad to set up links with Jewish communities. The contacts, the weekly noted, would be maintained by senior officials of the PLO and the Palestinian National Council.

The weekly notes that Jewish communities are showing greater understanding of the legitimate rights of the Palestinians and are voicing increasing public criticism of Israel's policies.

The ministry directive states that this new PLO policy apparently manifested itself during the London appearance this week of Hani al-Hasan, Yasir 'Arafat's political adviser, in a public forum of the Radical Society with prominent British Jews including Lord Evelyn de Rothchild and Lord Goodman.

The ministry notes that Al-Hasan "exploited" his appearance by making moderate statements and thus attempting to elicit condemnation of Israel by the British Jewish establishment.

Syrian Support for Hizballah Called 'Serious'

TA1512100989 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 15 Dec 89 p 1

[Text] Visiting the security zone yesterday, Defence Minister Rabin disclosed that Syrian troops had helped the pro-Iranian Hizballah in recent fighting against the rival Shiite Amal militia in Lebanon's al-Biqa' Valley.

"This is a serious development," he said. The Syrians previously supported Amal.

Black Panther Squads Reorganizing in Nabulus

TA1512094689 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 15 Dec 89 p A1

[Report by Yizhar Be'er]

[Text] A group of masked youths known as the Black Panther, most of whose members were killed or captured in an IDF [Israel Defense Forces] operation 2 weeks ago in the Nabulus casbah, has reorganized and has again been operating in Nabulus' old city. The main nucleus of the squad was destroyed, but dozens of youths now have joined its remnant and this week began to make their presence felt at a level of activity similar to that reached during last month's peak.

On Wednesday night, masked youths belonging to the Black Panther and armed with revolvers imposed a curfew on a section of the casbah and searched for collaborators who, they believe, provided information which helped the army eliminate three gang members. The youths blocked several roads and announced through megaphones: "The area has been declared under curfew until otherwise announced," which is an exact replica of army announcements when curfews are imposed. The inhabitants heeded the announcement and locked themselves in their homes.

During searches the youths detained a 30-year-old man from the Sarani family suspected of providing information, tied his hands and took him out to the street. At about 1300, as casbah residents looked on, they killed him with ax blows to the head and several shots to the head and chest. (Military sources reported that the body of a local was found and that the police are investigating.) Then they lifted the curfew. The first soldiers reached the casbah some 10 minutes after the murder.

Evidence of the level of self-confidence shown by Black Panther members is the fact that they roam around in broad daylight armed with revolvers and receive help from the 20,000 people living in the casbah, who protect them and warn them about the arrival of soldiers. After the lifting of the curfew imposed by the IDF on Nabulus, Black Panther members supervised condolence ceremonies at the homes of the fatalities. Eyewitnesses reported that group members armed with revolvers held a permanent watch at the homes of the dead men. There are an estimated 40 activists in the gang, aided by hundreds of supporters.

There has generally been a large increase in the actions of masked men in the West Bank in recent weeks.

In contrast to claims by military officials that only several dozen masked men are involved, it appears that it is in fact a much wider phenomenon.

It is estimated that in the West Bank alone there are thousands of uniformed masked youths armed with lethal weapons, including axes, swords, knives, and batons. The HA'ARETZ correspondent was present this week at two processions held by masked men armed with lethal weapons. The processions took place in two separate villages. Over 100 people took part in one procession and 50 in the other.

It should be pointed out that the growth of the phenomenon began after the orders on opening fire were changed

to permit shooting at masked men. The masked youths understand that a confrontation with the soldiers is virtually a death sentence for them, but in each village there are growing networks of masked youths. Only a minute and violent minority keeps firearms; it does not use them against IDF soldiers, but to settle internecine trouble. The youths carry out their activities while under heavy protection by people manning lookout posts and guards. The minute they are warned that soldiers are closing in, they disperse quickly and discard their uniforms and masks.

Defense Sources Analyze Intifadah, Future

TA0612192889 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1705 GMT 6 Dec 89

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[Report by army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe]

[Text] After 2 years of the intifadah, the toll is: Eight IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers killed. Additionally, 1,635 were injured. The intifadah is not over, and, even after 2 years, defense elements again recall that they never foresaw the outbreak of the uprising, adding nonetheless that the residents of the territories also failed to predict it. The goal is the establishment of a Palestinian state, the anchor—as they put it—being a civilian uprising that is supposed to affect world public opinion.

During the course of the past 2 years, 50,000 Palestinians have been detained. Some of them have subsequently returned to prison. This is a routine reality and a state of affairs so commonplace that the locals have learned to live with it. They understand, the defense sources claim, that this is a bitter, prolonged, and indecisive struggle. The Palestinians are unable to reinvigorate the uprising, but Israel has likewise been incapable of effecting a complete calm. Despite the difficulties encountered by the residents of the territories, it is impossible to point to a state of collapse. The bitterness on top of all this sustains these people, allowing them to pursue their activities.

The younger generation is fearless and serves as the spearhead. The situation is volatile. Yet this past year can be characterized by a lower number of mass, spontaneous riots and by a noticeably higher incidence of the phenomenon of masked individuals and violent gangs. Stonings continue to be the major problem, and no solution for that has been found as yet.

The sources further report that the intifadah has bred a leadership in the area, and there is likewise an infrastructure consisting of activists belonging to various organizations. The Islamic organizations have suffered numerous detentions in the middle of 1989 but are now recuperating. The PLO's dominance in the field is clearly felt, while the Islamic organizations—mainly Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]—likely will grow stronger.

The security elements also believe that locally initiated terrorist activity will continue to prove the main mode of operation. They anticipate that more bodies will establish themselves formally as organizations and that the longer the conflict continues the more violent acts spurred by blind hatred and vengeance should be expected.

All the talk of a general revolt is no longer heard because of the economic difficulties with which the population has not been able to live.

The security elements point to a certain increase in the number of terrorist attacks this year compared to last year. This year, 58 percent of the attacks took place in Judaea and Samaria, 25 percent in Gaza, and 10 percent in the Jerusalem area. The rise in the number of shootings is flagrant and attributed to the fact that wanted people have engaged in this business as a matter of routine, and that there are more joint operations. This is counterbalanced by a drop in the number of firebomb attacks: This year there were 980 such cases as against 1,600 last year.

It should be pointed out that approximately 60 percent of all the attacks are aimed against Palestinians. Thus, 136 locals have been murdered. More than 1,000 groups have been uncovered, of which 41 percent are affiliated with the PLO. The popular committees are the force behind the intifadah. The existence of terrorist squads does not necessarily point to a shift to the use of firearms. Rather, they merely serve to provide assistance for the intifadah, the security elements believe.

Five Reported Wounded in University Clashes

JN1412134889 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Randah Habib dispatch from Amman]

[Text] Five people were wounded in clashes that erupted in the city of Irbid, northern Jordan, during demonstrations organized as part of the week of solidarity with the Palestinian intifadah, which has entered its 3d year. This is what our radio has learned from a responsible source:

Eyewitnesses recounted friction on the al-Yarmuk University campus between two groups of university students—the first raised slogans considered anti-Jordanian by the other group. These frictions developed into confrontations outside the university campus. Two of the first group and three of the second were wounded in the confrontations.

Following the clashes, a 25-member group yesterday stormed the Palestinian cultural heritage exhibition on the university campus and destroyed the contents of the exhibition, established to mark the beginning of the intifadah's 3d year. Today, Thursday, which is a holiday, calm prevailed at the university, and no incidents occurred.

Our radio has learned from a responsible source that security authorities are planning to issue arrest warrants against those who resorted to violence outside the university campus. The same source stressed dealing with confrontations inside the university is a domestic affair that is the business of the university presidency itself.

Some sides are concerned the demonstrations being staged daily under democracy would allow infiltrators to divert these demonstrations from their objectives and promote jingoism.

University Source Comments

JN1412153389 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1440 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Text] Amman, 14 Dec (PETRA)—To clarify news reports carried by some news agencies on incidents that took place at al-Yarmuk University, a responsible source at the university has stated the following:

At approximately 1100 the day before yesterday, Tuesday, and after all the activities scheduled to be carried out by student bodies and societies in cooperation with the Office of the Dean for Student Affairs had taken place to mark the second anniversary of the blessed intifadah, a small group of students gathered at the Faculty of Science for almost a half an hour without obtaining a prior permit from the university administration. The group quietly dispersed.

Almost a half an hour after the group's dispersal, two students were beaten up by unidentified people outside the university campus. The competent security authorities have begun investigating the incident.

On the evening of the same day, three other students were attacked inside the university campus. Moreover, some unidentified people the following morning entered a [Palestinian cultural] heritage exhibition marking this occasion and destroyed some of the exhibits.

The university calls on its students to display further vigilance and caution, and at the same time, asserts its determination to continue to investigate these incidents and to punish those who undermined and harmed the unity of its students and diverted their attention away from their academic tasks.

King Husayn Meets U.S. Congressman, Delegation

JN1412172089 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1600 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn this afternoon received U.S. Congressman Wayne Owens and his delegation at the Royal Hashemite Court. The meeting was attended by the chief of the Royal Hashemite Court and the U.S. ambassador in Amman.

King Husayn Telephones Arab Leaders 7 Dec

JN0712190489 Amman Domestic Service in English 1700 GMT 7 Dec 89

[Text] His majesty the king conducted telephone calls with a number of Arab leaders. He got in touch with King Fahd of Saudi Arabia and discussed with him current Arab issues and exchanged with him views on national issues and bilateral relations. His majesty the king also contacted Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and talked to him about the latest developments in the Arab and international arenas. His majesty conducted telephone calls with Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, also with the Iraqi President Saddam Husayn, and the Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih. Their conversations dealt with national subjects and issues of mutual interest.

Editorial Says Israel's 'Blackmail' Days Over

JN1412170389 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 14-15 Dec 89 p 4

[Editorial: "Wake up Mr. Shamir"]

[Text] Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir's persistence on contending that Jordan is "the Palestinian state" is not intended only to derail the peace process in the Middle East and make a mockery of all the attempts to resolve the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the broader Arab-Israeli conflicts. As a matter of fact, there is a deep conviction held by all Arabs and many world analysts that Israel's "peace initiatives", including Shamir's election formula, are only tactical in nature and aim at gaining time to further consolidate the Israeli grip on the occupied territories. But what distinguishes the Shamir doctrine that Jordan is Palestine and Palestine is Jordan is that there is the fact that it contains even more sinister

motives behind it, which make it stand out as outrageously wicked. It is clear by now that Israel feeds on civil strifes in the Arab World and promotes the balkanisation of the Arab World and the turning of Arab countries into mini states perpetually locked in continuous turmoil. The best evidence of this diabolic strategy is Israeli conspiracies in Lebanon where the Zionist state's hands are still soaked with blood. Obviously the Israelis would like to see what happened in Lebanon repeated everywhere in the Arab World including Jordan, where they would cherish the thought of having Jordanians and Palestinians locked in a bitter conflict like that the Zionists have succeeded to accomplish in Lebanon. Nothing would suit Israel more than to see yet another neighbouring Arab country in a deep quagmire of civil strife and internecine conflict.

But Israel is in for a big surprise. The Palestinian and Jordanian people are responsible people, fully aware of the various conspiracies being manipulated against their harmony and cooperation. Above all, the Palestinian people would never waver from their struggle to establish their own state on their own soil. Likewise, the Jordanian people are a people who are proud of their identity and heritage and determined to fight tooth and nail against any conspiracy no matter where it originates from if it aims to compromise their identity and country. Shamir and his Likud clique are better advised to abstain from making reckless statements against Jordan and its unity and integrity. If Shamir and his short-sighted political allies think that time is on their side forever, they better take note of the fact that Arab rockets can now reach the heart of Israel in a matter of seconds and that the days when Israel could blackmail the Arabs are gone for ever. And if Shamir thinks he can fool some people with his repeated preposterous remarks about Jordan being Palestine or Palestine being Jordan, time will show him that the only people that he is fooling is his own. Better wake up, Mr. Shamir, from your false dreams and nostalgia for conquests of Arab lands because time is indeed working now against you.

Paper Welcomes Decision on Press Establishments

JN1212123089 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 12 Dec 89 p 4

[Second editorial: "...Glasnost Too"]

[Text] The last vestibule of scepticism and doubt over the new era that has dawned on Jordan was removed Monday with the government's decision to take its hands off the press by returning the management of the three major newspaper establishments to their rightful owners, who had nursed and developed them for years only to see them being taken away in August last year. Indeed, the move has also confounded many who had always been arguing that the dawn of a new phase in the history of Jordan was only just so much of ink on paper and nothing was going to change in real terms.

Coming closely on the heels of offering the Jordanians the most free and honest elections in the Arab World, the leadership's decision to free the press from all shackles is an unmistakable reaffirmation of the reality of a new political life in the Kingdom; the Jordanian perestroika, glasnost, call it what you will, but the fact remains that the swiftness with which the government of Mudar Badran moved to rectify mistakes and misguided policies speaks volumes for the sense of purpose and determination of the Kingdom's leadership to put the past behind them and embark on a new course for the country, its institutions and people.

Needless to say, press is one of the fundamental pillars on which the development of a country is built, and the restoration of all press freedoms as implied in Monday's government decision reflects the leadership's deep conviction that the Kingdom's turn towards a new course would be successful only if coupled with the freedom of expression. Now, with the process of democracy taking roots in the country's political psyche and with the openness that the whole system of government is adopting, the latest move to free the press puts the print media on its right track. There is no alternative to a free, informative, objective and non-biased media that keep people informed of realities.

Needless to say, the past one year plus was a dismal period in the history of journalism in Jordan. With the unfolding of the economic crisis late in 1988, newspapers were used to blame the problems on everyone, including the ordinary citizen, but not on the real culprits. And, last but not the least, after His Majesty King Husayn anounced the Nov. 8 elections, some journalists went to the extent of casting a cloud over the entire election and democratisation process in the country.

Over and above everything else, the Jordanian citizens have more than enough to celebrate with the changes in the newspapers simply because the triumphant return of the former chief editor of AL-RA'Y, Mahmud al-Kayid, to his rightful place at the helm of Jordan's largest-circulation daily is not only a source of excitement and pleasure for the newspaper's staff but also for the legitimacy and credibility of the Jordanian press.

Further Reportage on Syrian-PLO Clash in South

National Front Issues Statement

NC1412124089 (Clandestine) Voice of the People in Arabic to Lebanon 1130 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Excerpts] According to AFP, around 50 gunmen attacked the Syrian forces command post in al-Rumaylah at 0300 today. While these gunmen were retreating toward Sidon, they clashed with a Nasirite Popular Organization [NPO] position.

In a statement to the Voice of the People just a short time ago, Colonel Ziyad, commander of the Syrian forces in the area, said: In the confrontation with the agent and hired gunmen—the gangs of 'Arafat—and in denial of the reports by some suspicious media organs about the death of Major 'Ali and the unknown fate of Col Ziyad, we deny the report and confirm that none of our soldiers were injured and that the attackers suffered heavy losses in life and material after being repelled.

The National Lebanese Front issued a statement on the attack a little later. It said: At dawn today, armed groups belonging to the Fatah Movement—the 'Arafat group and to supporters of the Iraqi regime in Lebanon launched a treacherous attack on the national Lebanese forces' positions and the Syrian Arab forces in the al-Awwali river-the 'Alam-al-Rumaylah junction. Comrade Mahmud Jalal, member of the Lebanese Communist Party's Central Committee and member of the Central Military Command, and three comrades from the NPO—'Adnan 'Urabi, Khalil Muhyi-al-Din, and Riyad Rafful—were martyred as a result of the attack. A number of national front members and Syrian Arab soldiers were also injured.

The statement added: The Lebanese national and Islamic forces, the Palestinian organizations, and national Lebanese public opinion have roundly and comprehensively denounced this criminal action. It came only few hours before the meeting of the Arab ministerial committee with PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat and at a time when all the forces that want to ensure Lebanon's unity are confronting the state of insubordination that is represented by Michel 'Awn and his gang in order to eliminate this state and enable Lebanon to restore its unity and independence as a democratic country. It also came at a time when the Palestinian and Lebanese masses are marking the 3d anniversary of the intifadah and at a time when action is under way and with all available means to unite the ranks of the national Lebanese and Palestinian forces, Syria, and all the forces of the Arab liberation movement to ensure the best possible support for the intifadah, strengthen its position and role, and develop its struggle.

The statement said: The national Lebanese front considers this cowardly criminal attack to be directed against it, against all its groups, and against the national Lebanese resistance that is heroically confronting the Israeli occupation and repeated aggressions in the south and against the Palestinian camps. It calls on the Lebanese masses to rally around their national leaderships in the struggle against all actions that serve the Zionist enemy and the partitionist movement inside which is linked to that enemy. It also calls on the Palestinian masses and the honest Palestinian forces and organizations to stand alongside the patriotic Lebanese masses in denunciation of this action, to take all the measures that would prevent a repetition of such an act, to punish its perpetrators, and to exert utmost efforts to strengthen and entrench the relations of struggle between the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples and fraternal Syria in order to put an end to all actions directed against this alliance, regardless of the side they are on.

PLO Condemns Attack

JN1412131889 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Excerpts] The Syrian military intelligence post in southern Lebanon came under a big attack today. Security sources in Sidon said that 50 armed men attacked the Syrian intelligence command post in al-Rumaylah, on the coast 7 km north of Sidon, killing at least 8 and injuring 19, including Syrian soldiers. [passage omitted]

The PLO issued a statement in Tunis saying that it condemns such operations and that it has ordered Fatah to investigate the operation with the participation of the Lebanese nationalist parties and the Syrian forces there.

Further Details of Attack

NC1412142489 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1230 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Text] According to reports from the South, most of the 150 pro-'Arafat assailants involved in the attack against the Syrian position approached from the direction of the sea, while the others infiltrated at a point between al-Rumaylah and al-Awwali to cover the retreat of the attacking group.

The reports say that four attackers were killed. The bodies of three of them were retrieved. The fourth, a member of the Kan'an family in Tripoli, belongs to the remaining elements of the Islamic Unification Movement who stayed in Sidon instead of returning to Tripoli when the Syrian Arab forces took control of the area.

Casualty Toll Updated

NC1412161389 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1545 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Text] According to the latest reports from Sidon, 13 people were killed in the attack on the Syrian intelligence service post in al-Rumaylah, north of Sidon, at dawn today. REUTER said that five Syrian soldiers were among the dead.

Colonel Ziyad, commander of the Syrian forces in the Sidon area, denied that there had been any casualties

among Syrian troops and accused Yasir 'Arafat's supporters of launching the attack.

The PLO leadership in Tunis issued a statement condemning the operation and announced that the Palestinian leadership had issued orders for an investigation of the incident.

Syrians Prepare Counterattack

NC1412173389 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1645 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Excerpts] The areas of Sidon and the coast of Iqlim al-Kharrub are still experiencing the aftermath of the clashes which took place at dawn today between pro-'Arafat Palestinians on the one hand, and Syrian troops and gunmen of the Nasirite Popular Organization on the other. Tension is high and the presence of armed men is noted in the region. [passage omitted]

Citing Lebanese security sources, ASSOCIATED PRESS reports that Syrian troops and tanks are being deployed in preparation for a counterattack.

'Arafat Forces Blamed for Attack

NC1412190889 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Excerpts] The PLO denied in a statement in Tunis today that it is responsible in any way for the attack which an armed group launched on the Syrian intelligence service general headquarters in southern Lebanon. [passage omitted]

According to information received by our radio, the Palestinian attackers used frogmen who were transported in rubber dinghies to the vicinity of the al-Awwali estuary. They met there with other units who participated in the attack from the direction of 'Alman and al-Awwali. Further details on the incident indicate that the attackers succeeded in escaping after storming the Syrian headquarters in al-Rumaylah and detonating explosives inside it. Security sources in Sidon stated that the attack caused major property damage. According to the same sources, 2 Palestinian attackers were killed and 10 others were wounded. Four Syrian guards who had been stationed outside the building were wounded. A Syrian officer was regarded as missing or thought to have been taken hostage. The sources added that the attackers also took away with them an activist of the Islamic Unification Movement who had been held in custody at the Syrian headquarters. [passage omitted]

REUTER, citing security sources, reported the Palestinian attack as follows: At least 13 people died when pro-'Arafat fedayeen attacked a Syrian Army post in the South. The agency added that five Syrian soldiers were among the dead in a battle which witnessed the most violent fighting between PLO fighters and Syrian soldiers in the South in 11 years. The news agency added that Islamic Unification Movement fighters joined in the fighting.

Abu-Musa [Sa'id Musa Muragha], leader of Fatah-The Uprising, accused pro-'Arafat forces of launching the attack at dawn today on a Syrian position near Sidon. He said that the incident demonstrates the choice that 'Arafat has made and proves that he stands in the trench of the hostile forces.

A spokesman for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine said that what has happened is something to be denounced and rejected.

'Clandestine' Group Threatens To Kill Pope

NC1412155989 Paris AFP in English 1550 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Text] Beirut, Dec 14 (AFP)—The clandestine Organization for the Defense of the Oppressed threatened Thursday to kill Pope John Paul II and told the Papal Nuncio here, Monsignor Pablo Puente, to leave Lebanon as soon as possible.

In an Arabic-language communique delivered to a Western news agency in Moslem West Beirut, the group said it had "decided to sentence the Pope to death," because he had become the "spiritual guide of the rebel crusaders in (Christian) East Beirut."

The rhetoric resembled that of previous communiques from pro-Iranian groups here.

The Organization for the Defense of the Oppressed last August threatened to kill the Pope if he ever visited Lebanon.

The latest warning came after the Vatican indefinitely postponed a meeting, scheduled for Tuesday, between Agostino Cardinal Casaroli, its secretary of state, and a committee of Arab foreign ministers from Algeria, Morocco and Saudi Arabia charged with seeking peace in Lebanon.

The ministers met on Monday [11 December] with French President Francois Mitterrand and Foreign Minister Roland Dumas, after which Mr. Dumas said France supported the Arab plan.

Msgr. Puente has not yet presented his ambassadorial credentials to Lebanon's Syrian-backed President Ilyas al-Hirawi, whose authority is challenged by Christian leader Michel 'Awn.

Pro-Syrian newspapers here on Thursday accused the Vatican of undermining the Arab peace plan.

"What does the Vatican want from Lebanon? Why did the Pope refuse to meet the foreign ministers of the Arab triumvirate?" the AL-SAFIR daily asked in a banner headline.

"The Pope is promoting the halt of the reunification process in Lebanon," the paper said, suggesting that the Vatican was siding with Gen. 'Awn.

The communist AL-NIDA' said in a headline: "The Vatican's policy reinforces (Gen.) 'Awn's partitionist policy."

Gen. 'Awn specifically objects to an Arab peace plan, ratified by the Lebanese parliament, that called for a presidential election but did not stipulate the removal of some 35,000 Syrian troops from the country.

Lebanese Forces' Editorial 'To Assail' 'Awn

NC1112193489 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1230 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] Divisions persist [in East Beirut] after Michel 'Awn blocked plans by the Lebanese Forces [LF] and the Phalangist Party to hold a festival. The LF used an editorial in the magazine AL-MASIRAH, the LF mouthpiece, to assail 'Awn and other East Beirut figures.

The editorial entitled "Reconsider Your Calculations, We Are Still Around," said: We have not yet forgotten that some parties wanted the LF to remain silent or disappear from the scene. We will not forget the silence of some people when the LF came under attack [by Michel 'Awn] on 14 February 1989 and their tacit endorsement of the cheap accusations made against the LF at the time to justify that move.

Many have accepted 'Awn's accusations that the LF is a deviant and corrupt militia that steals, robs, exports hashish, runs brothels, and engages in other disreputable pursuits we do not wish to recall. Only a few days after the accusations were made, the editorial added, everyone was asking for our help and begging us to return to our positions, our cannons, and our ramparts.

AL-MASIRAH said: They promised us liberation. They said: Let us fight the Syrians with guns and knives and liberate the land an inch at a time. We said: It is wrong to fight Syria with means in which it has an edge and in an unfavorable international climate. So, where are we now? We are afraid for B'abda and for the northern and southern al-Matn. We have lost the war of liberation. Let us be reasonable. We have lost the last liberation battle as we lost before in the Mountain in [former President] Amin al-Jumayyil's time. Still, there are some who are worried because the LF has decided to speak up and because the LF banged on the table and said: Reconsider your calculations; we are still around.

AL-MASIRAH assailed those who nurse ill-feelings toward the LF and seek to undermine it. Among these, the magazine said, are some Phalangist Party members who have links with certain individuals and families as well as some members of the Guardians of the Cedar and al-Tanzim Parties.

AL-MASIRAH ended its editorial by saying: Let all those in East Beirut reconsider their calculations. Those who want to get angry or consider us enemies may do just that. The LF is here to stay, and everyone should reconsider their positions.

Al-Hirawi Interviewed on Political Situation

JN1112201289 Kuwait AL-QABAS in Arabic 8 Dec 89 pp 9, 21

[Interview with President Ilyas al-Hirawi by AL-QABAS chief editor Muhammad Jasim al-Saqr "in the president's temporary office at the Ablah Barracks in Lebanon's al-Biqa' Valley"; date not given]

[Text] [Al-Saqr] Your Excellency the President: It is said that Lebanon needs 6 decades, not 6 years, to unite in a single republic. Actually, we are now searching for a first step on the ground, which has not been taken thus far. Are there many people inside and outside of Lebanon who fear that time is running against you?

[Al-Hirawi] First, the question you raised that we need 6 decades to unite Lebanon, which cannot be united in 6 years, is unfounded because the Lebanese deputies who met in al-Ta'if—and who became very friendly with each other from the first meeting—are the mirror of the Lebanese people. I believe that the agreement reached in al-Ta'if by the people's representatives clearly shows that we do not need 6 decades, not even 6 years, to unite this people.

Regarding the agreement reached in al-Ta'if—and although this is not related to the question—I must say that for the first time in Lebanon's history, and for the first time in 15 years, the Lebanese people are meeting and deciding for themselves, without any external intervention, their future peace process.

Based on the agreement reached, I assert that the Lebanese people, with all their groups and spiritual families, will join each other. I am worried about the many kisses they may receive, and not about division.

Let us move on to what is going on in the eastern districts. So far, I have not managed to reach the presidential office in B'abda. In my view, every inch of Lebanese territory belongs to all Lebanese, and to the president of the republic as well. I stayed in al-Biqa' because my house is in Zahlah and I do not wish to go down to the capital, not for security or other reasons, but because the western sector [of Beirut] is the place for the prime ministry—and I say this with regret and hope there will be no East and West Beirut. I do not wish to sit in the prime ministry or share with the prime minister his prerogatives.

I am now in al-Biqa' temporarily, and I assert that this presence is temporary. Certain matters which I and my government have arranged to reach the presidential office in B'abda were blocked because of many outside interferences by brothers and friends, beginning with the superpowers, France, the EEC, and all countries. We hope we will soon, very soon, reach our legal and constitutional place through the olive branch, not the cannon.

If all these efforts to mediate fail, then the state institutions seized by the rebellion—or, let me call it the

usurpation—in the eastern districts must be regained by all means because the march of the country must begin at any price.

[Al-Saqr] Mr President: Military experts agree that there is a clear imbalance between the army under your command and the army under General Michel 'Awn. Your Excellency has been reported as saying that the liberation of the [B'abda] palace will be carried out by a Lebanese force if it becomes impossible to reach a peaceful solution. How will this happen?

[Al-Hirawi] If a peaceful solution becomes impossible, we will hold the usurper responsible. We will also hold those from the Lebanese Army who stay around him responsible. The Lebanese Army belongs to the country, and not to an individual.

This institution, including its officers and soldiers, had sworn allegiance to the Lebanese flag and to Lebanon, and not to anyone else. What we are witnessing now has no precedent. Imagine former President Amin al-Jumayyil stating on the eve of 23 September 1988 that he is staying in office and that he will not have any minister of his government give over to his incoming counterpart. What is happening now has no precedent in Lebanon's history. Every president has handed over to the one succeeding him in office. I have enough faith in the patriotism of the officers and soldiers of the Lebanese Army to believe that they will join the mother military institution and their new chief. I think that those who are still in the eastern district are not there of their own free will. They are experiencing daily intimidation, and I have enough information to back this up. I will not accept the argument that the Lebanese Army is powerless, though. The new commander is a capable man and is currently calling at military barracks in the north, the capital, and Mount Lebanon, and in the al-Biqa', preparing to enter the eastern district through peaceful rather than military means. If resistance is put up, then I will have to invoke all the means at my disposal to suppress this phenomenon in the eastern districts.

[Al-Saqr] Do you foresee certain militia forces taking part?

[Al-Hirawi] None. I will not accept any militia forces being deployed alongside the Lebanese Army.

[Al-Saqr] Nor the Syrian Army?

[Al-Hirawi] The Syrian Army is a friendly one. The al-Ta'if agreement stipulates that it may be enlisted to reassert state authority over the entire Lebanese territory. We will enlist the Syrian Army in the event of a militia force refusing to abide by a decision to be made by the next cabinet session disbanding militia forces. Syrian forces' assistance will be sought wherever they are needed and happen to be deployed. This applies to the Lebanese Army.

[Al-Saqr] Your Excellency the President: Did you say you will order the militia forces to be disbanded?

[Al-Hirawi] The al-Ta'if agreement, to which we all agreed, states word for word: In order for the state to reassert its authority over all parts of Lebanon, there must be a security plan drawn up by the government. The plan must begin with dissolution of the militia forces. If they submit to the government's decision peacefully—which I hope they will—that is fine. Otherwise, they will be suppressed with all means available to us. The al-Ta'if agreement is clear and frank. We have to begin with certain constitutional amendments to set at ease the minds of some Lebanese families. Once the constitutional amendments are in place, we will proceed to devise a security plan beginning with the dissolution of the militia forces and the reassertion of state authority over all Lebanese territory.

[Al-Saqr] Your Excellency the President: We know that the continuation of the civil war in Lebanon is mainly due to the fact that the militias benefit from this war through their influence and threats. Now you have the problem of 'Awn. If you end this problem, another problem—the problem of the militias, which will not surrender easily—will begin. As a result, war may break out again between the official army and the armed militias. Will we have to begin our life in the second republic in Lebanon with pessimism and to anticipate a civil war?

[Al-Hirawi] First, I reject the idea of civil war, because the war was launched against Lebanon by others, but through the Lebanese. The money and weapons which poured into Lebanon belong to other sides. I do not want to relate how the war began to weaken the Middle East [peace process] and to draw this process into a dark tunnel, whose end only God knows. As a result of the good offices of the Arab League, the tripartite committee, and friendly forces everywhere, the door will not remain open for anyone to force his money and weapons into Lebanon.

We have a clear vision of the future. I pledge that the militias will be completely abolished. The militias which reject the government's decision will be oppressed by the Lebanese State how, when, and where it wishes.

[Al-Saqr] We are supposed to believe that Your Excellency's statement is due to a series of clashes among 'Awn's officers in the eastern areas. Can we gamble on a rift within the 'Awn-controlled forces?

[Al-Hirawi] This will certainly take place. I have many confirmations which I cannot disclose until that rift occurs.

[Al-Saqr] Within 'Awn's forces?

[Al-Hirawi] Certainly. I cannot elaborate on this point, either, because such issues are military secrets. The army commander and the defense minister should keep them secret and implement them. This is the duty of the army and its officers and soldiers. I have confirmations that the current situation in east Beirut will not last long. We are eager to rebuild and reunify the army because its

future action will be the spreading of the sovereignty of the state over Lebanese territories.

[Al-Saqr] Have you contacted Samir Ja'ja', who acknowledges that you are the legitimate president of Lebanon and who withdrew his recognition of 'Awn despite the recent sensational speeches in East Beirut?

[Al-Hirawi] I can say that the doors of the presidency, not the Presidential Palace, because I still live in a simple house, are open to every Lebanese citizen. We are completely ready to listen to the citizens' demands and we are also trying to achieve their aspirations. I believe that Dr Samir Ja'ja' is at the head of those who have approved the recent elections. He publicly called me president three times. I have not met him and we have no messengers between us, but I know the man. He wants to unite the state. I believe that al-Ta'if agreement can achieve, at least partially, every Lebanese citizen's aspirations. There are decentralization arrangements in Lebanon. This will enable us to be fair to people. Neither political decentralization nor military decentralization will satisfy. Only administrative decentralization can work. In al-Biqa', for example, any simple paperwork begins with the district commissioner and ends with the governor. Then you have to go to the minister and wait there for 1 week to sign it. We want every area to have its own way and be administratively responsible. Advanced countries apply this sort of decentralization.

[Al-Saqr] Is President al-Hirawi repressive?

[Al-Hirawi] The word repressive suggests that I am toting a gun, although I have pointed out that I am holding an olive branch. If the olive branch will do the job, that is well and good. Otherwise, in the kind of circumstances we are experiencing, the leader of the country—out to achieve Lebanon's unity and put it back on the course of peace and to end all forms of violence—cannot but crack down to correct the aberration that has been with us the past 15 years.

[Al-Saqr] We have heard that the plan of the legitimate authorities envisages the assimilation of militia elements into legally costituted local forces to be under the control of a local administration within the context of decentralization?

[Al-Hirawi] Decentralization is on the agenda. In the parliamentary bloc to which I belonged before I became president, we had an integrated blueprint on administrative decentralization for all the country's regions. I supported the plan when I was a parliament member and I still do. The al-Ta'if agreement came to make this possible. Every region would have a governorate of its own and would apply for resources from the central government. As for the infrastructure, this will have to be the concern of a central 5-year plan. I will not accept for certain regions to remain deprived. I will not accept for any region in Lebanon to contain an underprivileged community or that there are deprived regions in Lebanon. This state of affairs should not be allowed to persist. We will do what we can and within the limits of the means available to us both in terms of the budget and potential loans or grants. Of this I am certain. There have to be well-defined programs for each of the country's regions. A minister hailing from al-Biqa' will probably not know the exact needs of the south, which is why we have called for decentralization providing for the people to assusme their own responsibilities in their respective regions and thus all would participate in the democratic process. The al-Ta'if agreement, which has won the support of deputies and been ratified by the House, has paved the way. Rather than the new president beginning his term by sounding out the checkered opinions of the Lebanese on internal and external issues, Lebanese deputies managed in 24 days of meetings in al-Ta'if to draw up a clear plan of action for the president. It has spared us the sophistry of the past when all kinds of committees had failed to achieve anything. As I said at the beginning of the interview, the al-Ta'if agreement has not satisfied all aspirations but it has put Lebanon on the right road to peace. When Lebanon regains its freedom, independence, and tranquillity, and is rid of militia forces, it will be possible to have a constitution laying the groundwork of understanding among the country's communities. The point of departure would then be a constitution superior to the agreement we have worked out. In the speech I made after I was sworn in, I pledged to see to the implementation of the al-Ta'if agreement. The power now rests with institutions rather than with individuals. All apprehensions of autocracy are now a thing of the past. The country will be ruled through constitutional institutions.

[Al-Saqr] Within the democracy?

[Al-Hirawi] Of course within the democracy. I will not accept it otherwise because Lebanon would lose this trait. Had Lebanon accepted a military rule, 'Awn would have controlled all the territory. Lebanon accepts only its institutions to govern it. The al-Ta'if agreement says that Lebanon is a free, independent country, with a parliamentary system. The phrase "parliamentary system" means that Lebanon is unlike other countries. We are a free parliamentary system. In my recent speech I said that if 'Awn continues and seeks a job in politics, I will give him the license to work in this field.

[Al-Saqr] This means that you will ensure for him the right to establish a party?

[Al-Hirawi] Certainly I will ensure that for him. Let him see how the al-Ta'if agreement will be implemented and how the state's authority will spread over the Lebanese territory. I do not want to start bickering with General 'Awn but today I heard on the radio that he is ready to reach an understanding with Syria and if Syria convinces him that its defense interests necessitate keeping its Army in Lebanon, he would be perfectly prepared to agree to this.

Let me repeat what 'Awn said in order to show how his words contradict his deeds.

1. He wants negotiations with Syria. In what capacity? I do not know. If as a politician, Syria has an open heart for politicians. However, I say that the coming negotiations will be between the Syrian Government and the Lebanese Government. I will not accept that these negotiations be conducted by any Lebanese individual. Such an individual may present a memorandum or authorize a Lebanese deputy to present his case for him in the Chamber of Deputies. We are perfectly prepared to listen to everyone. But we will not allow the state to be turned into a farm with each individual conducting negotiations on his own. We will never agree to that.

2. He said in his statement this morning: Recognition of Syria's vital interests. In the al-Ta'if agreement, we did not decide that. We said that the Lebanese and Syrian Governments will hold negotiations in view of our history, that we are neighbors geographically.

Today, the whole world is grouping either politically or economically. We can see what is happening in Europe and between the United States and Canada where the border restrictions are expected to be abolished shortly.

We suffer from estrangement and disintegration. We have two neighbors: Israel, which is an enemy, and Syria, with which we are Arab League members. Will we continue the same old pattern? Peoples establish amity among themselves through history. This is a fact. We intermarry and speak the same language. We reach understanding. However, on the political level, there has not been a clear policy between the Syrian and Lebanese Governments for the past 46 years. We want to establish this policy and make it permanent. We do not want these relations to be subject to the whims of a minister here or a minister there, a president here or a president there.

3. 'Awn continues: Accepting the principle of Syrian military presence on Lebanese territory. In the al-Ta'if agreement we did not say that we accepted this. We programmed the Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon and defined a 2-year time frame during which we will establish our own forces. We need them most at the present time because the country is on a volcano and we do not know when it will erupt. The land under our feet is full of mines. With their assistance, we now want to get rid of the militias in areas where the Syrian forces are stationed. We also have to remove the armed militias from the eastern area. Let everybody work in politics; the door is open for them. We are prepared to welcome them to participate in the government when they become qualified for this. We are prepared to reconstruct the government and change the number of ministers in order to let all the Lebanese, even the leaders of militias, share in the decisionmaking process because we want to end this anomalous situation.

'Awn also says: We must ask Syria to define its demands in Lebanon. If the Syrians announce what they want from Lebanon, and these demands are not in line with my sovereignty and freedom how can 'Awn claim that I will accept these demands? I want to negotiate with Syria as one independent state to another independent state. If Syria should make a demand incompatible with our independence and freedom, then I would say gently: Sorry, but I will not accept this. I will accept anything that serves the interests of the two parties. 'Awn tells them: Please tell me what you want from Lebanon. Perhaps they want nothing, or many things. I will not permit him to do this. Who has tasked him to carry out negotiations?

Does he want me to stay on the contact lines and maintain the partitioning and wait for him to decide when to reopen or close the crossing points? We want to unite the Lebanese people and keep the crossing points open. The Berlin Wall collapsed. Demonstrations are being held in all the East European countries and people are freely asking for what they want. Let us see what the entire Lebanese people want. The Lebanese deputies are those who speak on the Lebanese people's behalf. With God's help, we succeeded in ending what has been taking place on the ground so that we may soon hold a referendum through which the people will choose their deputies. These young people who demonstrate most probably are not satisfied with the deputies who represent them. However, several deputies can come out from among these young people. They are welcome. Let them enter Parliament and give their opinion within the framework of Lebanon's future, unity, and independence. I reject the establishment of midget republics here and there.

You asked me whether I will accept 'Awn joining the cabinet. I will not accept this. Constitutionally, Michel 'Awn was appointed by presidential decree issued by former President 'Amin al-Jumayyil as head of the transitional government. The task he and his cabinet had to assume was a specific task, that of running daily affairs to safeguard the people's daily livelihood and to prepare for elections. Michel 'Awn was neither tasked to carry out political actions, nor to decide Lebanon's future. This is something he cannot do, especially after the election of a president and the formation of a cabinet. He has no right to interfere in these matters. If he wants to carry out political activities, let him work in the political field.

I do not accept that he establishes a special militia of his own from the Lebanese Army and waits for me to tell him: I will do as you want. He is a state employee and continues to be an employee in the Lebanese Army institution, even though he has the rank of general. He is at the disposal of the defense minister. If he resigns and applies for a license to form a political party, then he can ask for an appointment to discuss matters. But right now, I consider him to be an insubordinate officer who is in control of several government bodies and the presidential palace. He has no right to reside in it. There are no negotiations with me in this respect.

Why should I appoint him as a minister? If I do so, every officer will do the same thing and ask to be appointed as minister. He has a trust which he ought to give back. If he

wants, he can work in the political field, and this might lead him to the post of president of the Republic in the future. Had I not been a politician, I would not have become a president. I gradually worked my way into politics. I started as a member of a municipality council. I failed twice in the elections. I was elected a deputy the third time. I also held the post of head of the delegation to the Food and Agriculture Organization for a long period.

I also worked as a minister during the rule of president Ilyas Sarkis. I served as an official rather than a minister at the Ministry of Public Works. I continued to work in this capacity until I ran for the presidential elections. The late martyred president Rene Mu'awwad and George Sa'adah were among the major candidates. Of course, I won the least number of votes during these elections; namely, 5 votes. Upholding democratic traditions, I then immediately withdrew my presidential candidacy and placed myself at the disposal of the one who will be elected president. I did not do this to ensure for myself a ministerial post. I displayed this cooperation because I am interested in seeing Lebanon united and also in seeing the peace march launched. Mu'awwad was not destined to live. I am sorry that I am succeeding a martyred president. I always wanted to succeed a president who was still alive. The deputies in Shtawrah asked me to run for the elections for the second time, and I did. Before that, Edmund Rizq nominated himself as a presidential candidate, but he later withdrew. Our colleague Mikha'il al-Dahir nominated himself but failed to pursue the issue. Pierre Hilu said that he does not want to nominate himself before the session [of the Chamber of Deputies] convenes. The name of President Franjiyah was proposed as a consensus candidate. However, the deputies failed to reach a consensus on him. I was the last to ask to be allowed to speak. When that happened, I said: Allow me to join the convoy of martyrs. I believe that martyrdom for the sake of serving Lebanon is a cheap price to pay.

I would like to say something concerning my own family. None of my family members was happy with my candidacy. They called on me in the Park Hotel only 48 hours after I was elected president, because they thought my move was a suicidal one. Titles do not dazzle me. I do not like the phrase his excellency the president. I believe that making sacrifices for the sake of saving Lebanon is a duty. I take pride in saying that I have not left Lebanon for 1 minute over the past 15 years of war. When the situation was stable in the country, I used to leave Lebanon for only a week. I do not have a house in Paris, Geneva, or even a room outside Lebanon. My house is in Zahlah and my children have not left Zahlah over the past 15 years. I had to be in Beirut. My first home in Beirut was demolished and so was my second. I returned to Beirut after I became a minister. Before that, I used to live in Zahlah. When there was a session for the Chamber of Deputies, I used to go to Beirut. When I worked as a minister, I used to return to Zahlah every day to sleep there, as I did not have a house in Beirut at the time in which to sleep. In view of these principles, my policy is that the government will use the al-Ta'if agreement to reunify Lebanon regardless of the consequences. If people were to say in the future: "This man [Al-Hirawi] died for Lebanon," this would be like a lump of sugar in my mouth.

[Al-Saqr] Mr President, it is clear that you are optimistic and that you have a political program; namely, the al-Ta'if agreement. We hope to see your optimism well-founded. We also hope that regional and international circumstances will allow for the emergence of a solution. The Lebanese Army, with the help of the Syrian troops, will tackle the security aspect of the Lebanese problem. The other aspect of the Lebanese problem concerns the Israeli presence. Does the Lebanese president have the same conception regarding tackling the Israeli aspect of the Lebanese problem?

[Al-Hirawi] There is a proverb that says: Invoke optimism over the emergence of gladdening news, and then you will find your optimism well-founded. If one fails to show optimism from the outset, he should not have set himself arduous tasks by running for the presidential elections merely to be named president.

The al-Ta'if agreement contains provisions on everything. It has provisions concerning our tragic situation in southern Lebanon and western al-Biqa' and also on the Israeli Army's presence in the security zone and the anomalous situation that has been plaguing us.

The current situation in southern Lebanon is unacceptable. When the Lebanese Army demonstrated its vigilance and effectiveness in the past, it was present on the borders. An agreement was in force at that time. We adhere to this agreement, which is the truce agreement, until a substitute to it is found. Hence, the Lebanese Army does not maintain any presence in southern Lebanon. There is a resistance movement there, and this resistance movement has made numerous exemplary sacrifices. This resistance is being emulated in the occupied territories. Resistance nowadays is inside and not outside the occupied territories. This is what I meant in al-Ta'if when I said: I derive pride from the fact that resistance in southern Lebanon has taught others a lesson. They [the Palestinians] are no longer saying that the road to Jerusalem passes through Juniyah. Everybody knows how the incidents were triggered in Lebanon. We do not seek to open wounds and old issues. We seek to rebuild the Lebanese Army to a suitable and satisfactory level. We also want the Army, once an international understanding is reached among the United States, the USSR, the EEC member states, and fraternal states, to head for southern Lebanon with its personnel and equipment to ensure the absence of hostilities with Israel according to the provisions contained in the truce agreement. We want to do this when the Army attains the required strength. When that happens, we will ask the United Nations to implement Resolution 425 with the help of the United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon [UNIFIL], as we cannot, one way or another,

do without the UNIFIL at present. Only when we have reached the peak of preparedness and readiness can we manage without the help of the UNIFIL. Maintaining the current status in southern Lebanon, namely, the existence of the resistance movement, the militias, and parties, will not help rid us of this tragic predicament. Hence, our move to disband the militias in any conceivable way, whether through peaceful or military means, is motivated by a desire to reach a satisfactory result in southern Lebanon. If no such result is attained in southern Lebanon, the entire country will continue to suffer. Therefore, we are determined to pursue this effort. However, I cannot give you a deadline for translating this determination into acts and deeds. We need time to reunify the Army and rehabilitate it in the barracks so that it can see itself as a unified body. Our Army has never known sectarianism throughout its existence. As you see, I am residing in a military zone. Have I, the Christian Maronite president elected to highest position of power, been negatively affected by my stay in military barracks, most of whose personnel belong to a certain faith? I resigned myself to the Army with complete peace of mind regardless of everything that has been said. Many people wonder how I can live here. I would like to tell them that I have a sense of security here that would have been impossible to find even at my own home, simply because this institution known as the Army was built on the principles of safeguarding the state. The Army took the oath to preserve the Lebanese state. The Army has never called for partition or taken part in coups. Have we ever had a coup in Lebanon? This is the first abnormal situation that we see today. I am referring to the continuing mutiny. We have never seen an incident in which an officer revolts against a decision to transfer him to another Army unit. We have never seen an incident involving an officer who refuses to join his Army unit and declares himself a rebel. This has never plagued us before, and nowadays, we have this anomalous situation. We believe in the need to rebuild and rehabilitate the Army so that we can kill, once and for all, Israeli justifications for ensuring its own security, the border strip, and other issues. Friendly states and the UN Security Council resolutions will help us in this, if we make the proper preparations.

It is not important if the Army in southern Lebanon is attacked, or if the Israelis attack the Army. We are ready to suffer anything for the sake of the homeland. However, I pin my hopes on God and the friendly and fraternal countries. We are capable of rebuilding our army. We are not asking for a foreign army. There are Lebanese who can assume the responsibility.

[Saqr] Mr President, we wonder whether the many Israeli signals have played their part, one way or the other, in your delay in making a decision with respect to measures in the field. Is there any doubt that Israel is seeking to freeze your action in order to paralyze the Lebanese crisis?

[Al-Hirawi] I would like to confirm that Israeli signals were not the reason. Our many friends are the reason, the many friends such as the superpowers and the European countries who had supported al-Ta'if agrreement and continue to support it. The statement by the White House on Lebanon was clear and explicit. The same applies to the Soviets, and the Arab tripartite commitee's resolution. We have given the brothers and friends a chance to settle this insubordination through peaceful means. However, Israeli signals will not deter us from carrying out any effort to reunite the homeland. I am certain that Israel wants to fragment the entire region, and divide it into statelets so that it can play the role of policeman in the region. We have friends in the UN Security Council, the United States, the USSR, France, the EEC, not to mention our Arab brothers. If we do not succeed in settling the crisis peacefully, this remains a Lebanese internal affair, and we will not permit anyone to interfere in it. Israel will not succeed in deterring us. If it seeks to become an obstacle, this means it wants to create a war in the Middle East.

[Saqr] Samir Ja'ja' says that the military option will kill the al-Ta'if agreement. Do you not believe that prolonging the political option will also kill the al-Ta'if agreement?

[Al-Hirawi] I believe that procrastination in the implementation of the agreement is far more dangerous than the recourse to the military option. We have given the brothers and friends a chance. After all their mediation efforts, I will ask them the results. If they have not succeeded, then, and with their permission, we will be compelled to resort to force. This cannot last for weeks. It will only be a matter of days, because prolonging it further will only exacerbate matters.

Ibrahimi Meets With Al-Huss, Al-Husayni

NC1412201389 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Text] Lakhdar Ibrahimi, envoy of the tripartite Arab committee, paid a surprise visit to Prime Minister Dr Salim al-Huss and Speaker Husayn al-Husayni this evening. He was accompanied by his assistant Muhammad al-Azrawal. Afterward, he visited Attorney Nabih Barri, minister of hydroelectric resources, in his home.

It should be recalled that Ibrahimi accompanied members of the tripartite Arab ministerial committee on their tour of Damascus, Baghdad, Paris, and Rome.

Upon leaving Al-Huss' home, Ibrahimi was asked about the results of the Arab committee meetings and mission. He said: We have come to greet Prime Minister Dr Salim al-Huss, to hear from him about the work the government is currently doing, and to brief him on the talks we held in Damascus, Baghdad, Paris, and Rome.

Asked to comment on the failure to fix a date for the tripartite committee members to meet Pope Paul and the

effect of this on the committee's mission, Ibrahimi said: We asked for appointments with the parties we would have liked to meet, including the Pope. We were told that Pope Paul does not give audiences on Tuesdays, according to tradition. In addition, during the holidays, he has various commitments. We said that, God willing, we may perhaps have the honor of meeting him on another occasion. We hope that this matter will not be blown up out of proportion.

Asked if the Arab committee will embark on certain moves to break the current deadlock in Lebanon, Ibrahimi stated: We are in constant contact with the Lebanese Government to see what the Arab committee and the other parties can do to help Lebanon preserve security and calm. He said that the legitimate government is exercising its tasks fully. It will continue to do so until genuine accord is achieved in Lebanon and comprehensive reconciliation is attained from which no party is excluded or excludes himself.

It was pointed out that General 'Awn seems to be in rebellion against this legitimate authority and uses certain international stands, particularly that of the Vatican and, to some extent, that of France to support him in his continued rebellion. Asked how he views this, Ibrahimi said: As usual, I do not comment on the stands of brothers in Lebanon. However, there is no doubt that elections have been held in Lebanon and a government formed that the whole world recognizes and deals with. We were aware of this in all our contacts, particularly in Paris and Rome. There is full recognition of the existing legitimate government and readiness to do business with it.

Ibrahimi asserted: Everyone hopes that the necessary steps will shortly be taken to rebuild the state and establishments and bring complete peace back to Lebanon under good circumstances.

Interior Minister on 'Awn, Al-Ta'if Accord

NC0712182789 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1730 GMT 7 Dec 89

[Text] Interior Minister Ilyas al-Khazin has expressed his hope that Michel 'Awn will respond to the legitimate authority as soon as possible and leave the responsibility to the new legitimacy. If he refuses to do so, Al-Khazin said, his status will be illegitimate and he will be a mutinous officer. It will then be the right of Army Commander Emile Lahhud to use his authority.

In an interview with Kuwaiti newspaper AL-ANB', Al-Khazin said al-Ta'if document reflects the ambitions of all the Lebanese people for constitutional reforms and withdrawals.

Sa'adah Views Al-Ta'if Accord Implementation

PM1112141289 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 8 Dec 89 p 3

[Unattributed interview with Phalangist Party leader Dr George Sa'adah in Paris; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] [Interviewer] Do you believe that attempts are being made to obstruct the [al-Ta'if] agreement, or is it proceeding as planned, albeit slowly?

[Sa'adah] There are numerous reasons which have prevented the implementation of the al-Ta'if agreement's clauses as speedily as required. It should be noted that the stages of implementation have still not been completed. As you know, under the agreement the withdrawals and the extension of Lebanese sovereignty over Lebanese territory will not take place before the election of a new Chamber of Deputies speaker and president of the Republic, the formation of the government, and the constitutional endorsement of reforms. If you are asking why implementation of the agreement has not started, in fact it started with the election of the Chamber of Deputies speaker and the president of the Republic. It also started with the formation of the government, which will meet to draw up the final versions of the reforms stipulated in the al-Ta'if agreement. [passage omitted]

[Interviewer] Why have you not yet announced you and your colleague Deputy Michel Sasin's agreement to join the accord government of Prime Minister al-Huss?

[Sa'adah] As far as I am concerned, I have nothing to do with the government. Immediately after it was formed I announced my surprise at my inclusion as minister in it, because it is dependent on a decision by the Phalangist Party Political Bureau, of which I am head. I have not joined the government, nor have I assumed the portfolio assigned to me. I have not met with members of the government, who have met several times, appeared before the Chamber of Deputies, and gained its confidence. This shows that I still consider myself outside the new government. I met with the party [Political] Bureau on Sunday to prepare for a decision on Monday. We knew that the decision would reject participation in the government for various reasons. On Monday an announcement was made about Syrian military deployments around the eastern area [of Beirut] with a view to penetrating it. So the party Political Bureau announced that our participation or nonparticipation was no longer the essential issue. We had to confront the urgent situation resulting from those deployments. We kept the government participation card in our hand with the aim of using it to spare the eastern area further fear and bloodshed, and I believe that we have succeeded in that. I immediately contacted Interior Minister Ilyas al-Khazin in Shtawrah and asked him to inform the president and government that I would announce my resignation because of President al-Hirawi's statements about a military settlement in the eastern area by the Syria forces. But Ilyas al-Khazin told me later that President al-Hirawi did not say that and that the Presidency would issue a statement to clarify the matter. Indeed that clarification was made, but it came a little late, since the eastern area had already started to seethe and everything became confused.

[Interviewer] What is the alternative to the military settlements whereby President al-Hirawi will enter the B'abda Palace?

[Sa'adah] I believe that President al-Hirawi announced a few days ago that he would give peaceful means and internal and international contacts the chance. I must tell you that peaceful efforts are being made by numerous Lebanese figures, as well as international mediations. We hope these mediations will be able to replace the military settlement with an understanding on the recovery of the B'abda Palace. I personally was one of those trying to resolve the problem peacefully, and my recent move falls within that framework. Our concern now is to spare Lebanon and the Lebanese further bloodshed, tears, and destruction. [passage omitted]

[Interviewer] Within what framework will the General 'Awn question be resolved peacefully?

[Sa'adah] General 'Awn and everybody else knows the Phalangist Party's position on the potential burden of the present crisis. We now consider President al-Hirawi's government the legitimate government, just as in the past we considered General 'Awn's government the legitimate government. So General 'Awn—who is basically voicing the same ideas as we are—must act with that rationale. We must all unite to serve peace in Lebanon. I have called for General 'Awn's inclusion in the government so we can all become one united bloc in both the Chamber of Deputies and the government and work together to ensure the proper implementation of the al-Ta'if agreement. We must do the impossible to ensure the success of the al-Ta'if agreement, because if it does succeed, we will have achieved our objective without any bloodshed. But if, God forbid, it does not succeed, no charges can be leveled at us.

[Interviewer] What can you offer General 'Awn to induce him to abandon his position and withdraw from B'abda?

[Sa'adah] It has nothing to do with individuals or personal interests. We are working in the national context. So when our national demands are realized, we and General 'Awn will have received our gift. We considered the al-Ta'if agreement the most effective means to liberate Lebanon, albeit in stages. So if anyone considers 2 years a long time and believes that Syria could remain in some Lebanese areas beyond that time, let them kindly explain to us what their alternative is. If others can get Syria out tomorrow, the day after, or in a month or 2, I promise you that we would then oppose the al-Ta'if agreement and promptly rally around any group capable of achieving rapid liberation.

[Interviewer] Have any attempts been made recently to bring you and General 'Awn together?

[Sa'adah] I have always expressed my absolute readiness to meet with General 'Awn. I contacted the general after we returned from al-Ta'if, but he did not reply. Despite this, I met with Abbot Bulus Nu'man in Ihdin and informed him of my readiness to meet with General 'Awn in the presence of any expert on constitutional law he may choose, whether in a secret or in an open meeting, to discuss the al-Ta'if agreement clause by clause. Then I suggested that the general and I hold an open debate on television in which each would present his viewpoint to the other. But I still have not received a reply. Through your newspaper I announce my readiness to conduct a debate with General 'Awn or anyone representing him in a public, secret, or small meeting. As long as our aim is to serve Lebanon and Lebanon's independence, it is our duty to the Lebanese to ensure that they hear, read, and see how and by what objective means we can regain our homeland, territory, and sovereignty. I am very proud and pleased that in agreeing to the al-Ta'if agreement I did not make a mistake or commit a crime. In fact my fellow deputies and I were convinced that the al-Ta'if agreement—while perhaps not expressing all our aspirations—could be a means of restoring Lebanon's sovereignty, especially since we are backed by the Arab group represented by the world's three largest and most influential Arab states.

Mansur To Stop Salaries Pending Army Approval

NC1412163589 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1400 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Text] Defense Minister Dr Albert Mansur decided today to stop payment of salaries and allowances of the military unless such payment is approved by Army Commander General Emile Lahhud and Brigadier General Lutfi Jabir, director general of administration in the Army. This new measure aims to link all the Army institutions with the legitimate authority. According to sources close to the defense minister, this step will be followed by other decisions aimed at reunifying the military establishment under the banner of the new legitimate command.

Military Source on Reinforcing Northern Front

NC1412160389 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1345 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Text] A military source has denied reports carried today by certain mass media about the Lebanese Army's 7th Brigade.

The source asserted that the reports are absolutely groundless and are part of the campaign launched by the occupation forces against the Lebanese military institution, with the aim of causing confusion.

In this connection, the source pointed out that the force which moved in the direction of the northern front went there to reinforce the front as a precaution against any possible attack. The source added that the force has been placed at the disposal of Staff Brigadier General Sami Rihanah, commander in chief of the 7th Brigade.

Transport Minister Comments on Egyptian Contacts

PM1412160989 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 14 Dec 89 pp 1-2

[Jamal 'Anayat report: "Meeting Expected Between Mubarak and Al-Asad To Discuss Resumption of Relations"]

[Excerpt] Damascus, Cairo, Tripoli, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Syrian Transport Minister Yusuf al-Ahamd has announced in an exclusive statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, which was represented aboard the first Egyptian passenger plane to arrive in Damascus in 12 years, that a meeting is expected between Egyptian President Husni Mubarak and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad to initiate the resumption of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Whereas Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi did not rule out the convening of a Egyptian-Syrian-Libyan meeting.

The Syrian transport minister said Damascus expects President Mubarak's personal envoy to arrive and meet with President al-Asad to complete contacts made between the two countries and to discuss all questions so there will be full cooperation between them in all fields.

On the possibility of Syrian officials visiting Cairo in the period ahead, he said there had been no barriers between Syria and Egypt, proof of this being the Syrian interior minister attending the Arab interior ministers conference in Cairo, and the Syrian youth minister attending the Arab youth ministers conference recently conducted in Cairo.

He added the Syrian officials' visits to Egypt emphasize the depth of relations between the two countries, whether through participation in political meetings or popular social meetings. He also said Egyptian officials are expected to participate in meetings that will be conducted in the future in Syria.

Yusuf al-Ahmad, who headed those receiving the first Egypt Air flight to arrive in Syria, said the reopening of the Cairo-Damascus air route marks the start of a new page in relations between the two countries, and that the announcement of the decision to start air flights is a historic moment and step in the Arab nation's interests.

He also said: We hold inside us every love and appreciation for Egypt.

He announced the Syrian authorities decided to give Egyptian citizens the same treatment as Syrian citizens, as Egyptians are allowed to enter without an entry visa. He also said: We hope Syrians will be treated the same.

He added for that reason, six flights a week by the Egyptian and Syrian companies will not be enough, considereing the increasing passenger traffic between the two countries. Nevertheless, they constitute an extensive start reflecting a real desire to deepen relations and increase tourism between the two countries. [passage omitted]

Media Commentary on 'Awn, Lebanon Continues

Force, Foreign Aid Advocated

JN1512153489 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 15 Dec 89

[Station commentary]

[Text] We always have said any duplicity on the part of this country or that, or any attempt to hamper or obstruct the al-Ta'if agreement on Lebanon only would increase 'Awn's illusions and encourage him to continue his rebellion against legitimacy. Events have proved this true. 'Awn has become so arrogant he wants every solution to pass through his hiding place in B'abda. As the old saying that all roads lead to Rome no longer is valid, it also is certain 'Awn would not have been so arrogant had there been no such duplicity, and had some countries not attempted to obstruct implementation of the al-Ta'if agreement.

'Awn's rebellion continues because of such negative positions, especially since these have been taken by parties whose message is supposed to be one of love, peace, cooperation, brotherhood, coexistence among all the different factions, and renunciation of animosity and hatred. Parties that have such a message certainly will take clear, frank positions on those parties whose message calls for war, fighting, destruction, and sowing of hatred and animosity among the sons of the one homeland.

Successive events in the international arena show how the rebel 'Awn should be treated. For example, events in the Philippines and the Comoros Islands can be viewed as examples for any legitimate authority to crush a rebellion. Countries of the world have approved the use of military force by the Philippine authorities against the rebels. Moreover, President Aquino's recourse to foreign forces is viewed by countries as natural. Nor do we disagree with France's dispatch of forces to the Comoros to end the coup carried out by mercenaries following the assassination of the ruler of those islands.

These events prove there is an international consensus there is no objection to resorting to foreign assistance to put an end to rebellion. Furthermore, because such an international consensus exists, as we have seen in the Philippines and the Comoros, there is no realistic justification for the position taken by some countries on Lebanon.

Solidarity 'Pressing Need'

JN1312085589 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0545 GMT 13 Dec 89

[Press review]

[Text] In its editorial on Arab solidarity, the newspaper TISHRIN says: Developments agian have proved the importance of and need for Arab solidarity. Solidarity among the Arabs always has been a factor of strength to the nation that safeguards its independent pan-Arab

decisionmaking, and enables the Arabs to adopt positions that are in harmony with their pan-Arab interests. Contemporary history indicates the achievement of Arab victories had much to do with the extent of Arab commitment to solidarity and rapprochement among them. Arab solidarity has achieved victory in the great October war of liberation. It also has secured the minimum level for the continuation of struggle against the Zionist aggression, and prevented the overall collapse of Arab ranks as a result of the imperialist-Zionist pressures. Arab solidarity also has kept alive the concept of Arab unity in the Arab conscience. On the other hand, the absence of Arab solidarity produced maladies and catastrophes in the Arab homeland that threatened its security and involved its states in serious problems.

Developments in the region and the world have proved the need for Arab abidance by the concept of solidarity. Facts also have proven it is impossible for any single Arab country, no matter how big its resources are, to resolve the problems of comprehensive development by itself and in isolation from other Arab countries. There are issues no Arab country can resolve by itself, such as those of water, environment preservation, and the establishment of future industries.

TISHRIN adds: Arab solidarity, therefore, has become a pressing need. In fact, it is one means to safeguard the Arab existence and guarantee the future of the Arabs. The importance of this solidarity has increased in light of the plans to unify the West European states as of 1992. As a result of the deep changes in the world, the Arabs now are required more than at any time in the past to exploit the winds of change and divert them to steer the ship of solidarity, so it can find its way through the hurricanes and overcome all obstacles.

Events proved the Arabs will have no future outside their unity and that solidarity is their means to achieve unity. Therefore, bolstering the Arab march of solidarity and struggle, which serves the nation's interests and reinforces its position, is at the top of the pressing pan-Arab tasks.

In its issue today under the headline "The Inevitability of the Collapse of Rebellion," the newspaper AL-BA'TH says: The restlessness that appeared in East Beirut during the past few days constitutes the first sign of the inevitability of 'Awn's collapse. The Lebanese, who have been suffering from war, tragedies, and ordeals for 15 years, do not want to lose the last opportunity for hope as a result of the madness of an aberrant general who has made himself an enemy, not only of all Lebanese, but of the whole world. This shows 'Awn has begun to experience difficulties, and that the overwhelming majority of the Lebanese are waiting for the moment the guns will be silenced to begin the process of salvation and to restore peace, security, and development. If the al-Yarzah general has succeeded in delaying this moment, benefiting from the flow of weapons, experts, and funds from Israel and the rancorous regime in Baghdad, this delay is temporary, and it will not last long. Lebanon, which, through its steadfastness and sacrifices, has triumphed over all its enemies and conspirators, will triumph over 'Awn and foil the plot and plotters.

On the same subject and under the headline "The Sound March," the newspaper AL-THAWRAH says: It is not strange that all leaderships, parties, and observers stress that dialogue with 'Awn is to no avail. This is because his role is exposed due to his treason. The Lebanese will undoubtedly is capable of pursuing the sound march to entrench the legitimate institutions, reactivate their role, overcome and remove all obstacles, and resolve the Lebanese crisis.

Reconciliation Progress Viewed

JN1412164989 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: Lebanon has made tangible progress on the road to the realization of national accord and the recovery of its health and vitality. All indications confirm the partitionist phenomenon in East Beirut is a transient stage that will vanish by virtue of the legitimacy forces' resolve to spread the government's authority and to provide security and peace for all citizens.

It is sufficient to look at Lebanon's state of affairs some time ago and the prevalent state of affairs now to discern the degree of progress Lebanon has made. In the past, the partitionists were in an offensive position; their bombs hit defenseless civilians and demolished properties. But they now are cornered and, even in a last-ditch position, very likely to fall at any moment. In the past, the partitionists used squads of terrorists and thugs to exercise hegemony over the eastern area and prevented the key figures there from voicing free and honest opinions. Today the deputies and spiritual figures of the eastern area are enrolled under the banner of the national accord and actually partake in building the new Lebanon that is permeated with justice and equality.

The enemies of Lebanon have resorted for a long time to feeding the fears of the Christian communities in order to strike at fraternal coexistence and drag the Lebanese into the quagmire of fragmentation and internecine fighting. Israel has played a basic role in this respect. Then General 'Awn came to carry out the conspiracy. The first thing he did was shell West Beirut, the mountain areas, and al-Biqa' so rancor and animosity would intensify. However, events—no matter how odious—were a fresh incentive for working hard to save fraternal Lebanon from its bleak ordeal. The Arabs thus responded to the call of Syria and Lebanon, and a meeting was conducted in al-Ta'if where an agreement was signed, and the legitimate Lebanese institutions were revived.

By their initiative to elect President al-Hirawi, the Lebanese have affirmed their determination to overcome the crisis following the partitionists' assassination of Rene

Mu'awwad. The situation today is satisfactory. The Council of Ministers is exercising its powers, the ministers are handling the citizens' affairs and problems, and President al-Hirawi is following up the current state of insubordination in the eastern area on the Arab and international levels. The president is optimistic this state of insubordination soon will be terminated and the captured part of Lebanon regained.

'Awn's isolation daily increases. Many officers have joined the legitimate authority and placed themselves at its disposal. There is clear restlessness in the ranks of the army brigades in East Beirut. The key figures there have reiterated their commitment to the march of accord and amity, and proclaimed their allegiance to President al-Hirawi. In fact, no reasonable man concerned about his country's cause will support the rebel general, who led Lebanon to disaster and is leading East Beirut to mass suicide.

'Awn's talk concerning his intention to hold parliamentary elections in East Beirut is ridiculous. This is so because the east is dominated by terrorism and hegemony. Such alleged elections are aimed only at consecrating the partitionist status quo in the country. The legitimate forces will not allow this in any way. Partitioning is inadmissible on the Lebanese, Arab, and international levels. If the legitimacy has given notice to the political maneuvering to end the insubordination peacefully and without bloodshed, this does not signify weakness or hesitation. It is sufficient to point out that the legitimacy controls 85 percent of the country and most of the Lebanese Army, and enjoys wide popular support, not to mention that the Syrian Arab forces also are at the disposal of the legitimacy and that all Arabs and the rest of the world have unequivocally expressed their overwhelming support for the march of national accord. Hence, the best 'Awn can do is quickly depart so he will not be forcibly ousted. It is time for him to understand partitioning is prohibited, that Lebanon, which has regained its vitality, has started its march, and that no one will be able to block this march.

Officials Deliver Pro-intifadah Speeches at Rally

JN1012080589 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1215 GMT 9 Dec 89

[Excerpts] Under the patronage of President Hafiz al-Asad, the Progressive National Front [PNF] Central Command conducted a speech rally at noon today at the al-Fayha' Hall in solidarity with the intifadah of our people in the occupied homeland and of the start of its 3rd year. The speech rally was attended by comrade 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, Ba'th Party assistant secretary general; Dr Muhammad Zuhayr Mashariqah, vice president of the republic; 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah, People's Assembly speaker; Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi; Dr Sulayman Qaddah, Ba'th Party assistant regional secretary; Khalid al-Fahum, speaker of the Palestine National Council [PNC]; the comrade members of the Ba'th Party national and regional commands; PNF Central Command members; and ministers. The rally also was attended by several Palestinian revolution factions' leaders, representatives of the Lebanese National Forces and Arab liberation movements in Damascus, heads of popular and trade organizations; secretaries of the Ba'th Party branches in Damascus, al-Qunaytirah, and Damascus University; the Damascus Governor; and the chief of staff of the Palestine Liberation Army. [passage omitted]

Comrade Sulayman Qaddah, Ba'th Party assistant regional secretary general, delivered a speech on behalf of the Ba'th Party. At the beginning of his speech, Qaddah conveyed greetings, appreciation, and love to all strugglers against the Zionist enemy from struggler President Hafiz al-Asad, who upheld the banner of steadfastness, established an impregnable resistance fortress, and lit an immortal torch of martyrdom. Comrade Qaddah addressed the brothers in occupied Palestine: We are with you on the path of struggle and martyrdom until we achieve victory. We support you the same way we support the heroes of resistance in occupied southern Lebanon who are registering the brightest record of resistance in the face of occupation.

Brother Qaddah added: We tell our brothers in the occupied Arab territories the blood of the martyrs will not go to waste, and that it will remain a torch lighting Arab skies. Comrade Qaddah asserted our pan-Arab decision is to hold fast to rights and not to bargain over them, and to reject capitulation to the occupiers or submission to the usurpers. He added: As comrade President Hafiz al-Asad asserted, we will remain in one trench with the Palestinian Arab people, partaking in their struggle in all arenas and fields.

Qaddah went on to say: While we affirm we want a solution to this conflict that achieves a just peace in our region, we mean that peace is an objective s attained through deterrent force and strategic parity with the enemy, and through the united pan-Arab stands that impose peace and dictate the pan-Arab will by force. Anything else is capitulation.

Comrade Qaddah affirmed the intifadah has confirmed to the entire world the Palestinian people's militant existence and their national right to their land. It also restored splendor and glamour to the Palestinian cause and exposed the falsehood of the enemy.

Comrade Qaddah added: Whatever degree the practices of oppression reach, the kinfolk's intifadah is the strongest because it is the intifadah of the unconquerable people. Comrade Qaddah affirmed the Palestine question is our central pan-Arab issue. Moreover, it is the issue of the Arabs and the core of our conflict with the Zionist enemy—a conflict involving destiny and existence.

Comrade Qaddah called on the Arab nation to strongly support the steadfast strugglers with the means of continuation through a strong mass awakening to face the Zionist threat. Comrade Qaddah also called on the Arab

governments to search for means of achieving Arab solidarity that can invigorate the will of steadfastness and mobilize energies and capabilities to face the Zionist danger.

Comrade Qaddah affirmed Lebanon's unity is a principled central issue that we cannot neglect or disregard. Protection of this unity is a pan-Arab responsibility we shoulder with determination and strength. Syria always has called on the Lebanese in their different geographical and political positions to achieve national accord to preserve the unity of the fraternal country and to regain security for its sons.

Comrade Qaddah added: Those who made themselves a tool in the game of fragmenting Lebanon, or those who dream of possiblyt establishing partitionist states, should realize continuation in this line and the confrontations of constitutional legitimacy will not be accepted. Syria will support the constitutional legitimacy with all its capabilities and unlimited determination to end tampering with the destiny and unity of the country. In this regard, no one should make mistakes in his calculations. [passage omitted]

PNC Speaker Khalid al-Fahum also delivered a speech in which he said: It is no wonder Damascus should be the sponsor of the second anniversary of the intifadah, and that Arab struggler leader Hafiz al-Asad should be the sponsor on this occasion. Syria is at the heart of the raging Palestinian intifadah.

Al-Fahum added: As we enter the 3d year of the intifadah, we testify to the great stands registered by this pioneer Arab country. We also are witnesses to the bravery of the masses, which created something miraculous at a time when miracles are so rare. The raging Palestinian intifadah is engendered by the earth's labor triggered by the crimes of desecrating holy places, wiping out an entire people, and disregarding human norms and values. He affirmed the beginning of a 3d year is proof of the intifadah's strength and of its having overpowered all ordeals and conspiracies that wagered on its termination. The Palestinian intifadah reinstated the Arab dimension of the Palestinian cause because it added to its revolutionary slogan one that says there is no coexistence with the Israeli occupation.

He went on to say: We in the Palestinian National Salvation Front reject all capitulatory offers and declare anew our firm adherence to the national charter, armed struggle, and unity of the land of Palestine, depending on the solid national will, which resists occupation. [passage omitted]

Afghanistan

President Najibullah Amends Press Law

LD1412105189 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] Esteemed Najibullah, president of Afghanistan, in accordance with Paragraph 2, Article 75 of the Constitution of the Republic of Afghanistan, has ratified an amendment to those three articles in the press law which had been approved based on the authority given in Decree No 6489 dated 24 November 1988 on the declaration of the state of emergency within Resolution No 184 dated 26 May of the Council of Ministers.

Paper Views U.S., Pakistani Assistance to Rebels

LD1412115789 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0457 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Text] Kabul. Dec. 12, BAKHTAR—Before the return of the limited Soviet military contingent from Afghanistan to their homeland, the Western mass media and their hirelings claimed that the missiles were fired to the cities by the Soviet troops in order to defame Mujahiddin and Jehad and the former do not fire rockets on cities because 95 percent of the cities' inhabitants are their supporters and are shortly going to take over the power. Says an article published in daily PAYAM, today.

However, the ignominious defeat of the world imperialism, Saudi's Wahabi and their stooges in the war fronts in the provinces of Nangarhar [sentence as received]. Khowst, Qandahar and Zabol enraged them more than before and in order to compensate for their defeat the U.S. imperialism has recently gifted them with mass killing rockets over and above their previous long-range rockets, the article adds.

The firing of the new American rocket, which runs counter to the Geneva Convention clearly demonstrates that the question of human rights is not important to the world imperialism because the United States wants to despatch to Afghanistan its new and modern mass annihilation weapons in order to preserve its vital interests here by professional terrorists under the name of Islam and Jehad.

The article adds that the extremists have fired over four million rockets over residential area killing 2,500 and injuring 5,600 persons. This clearly shows that the war in Afghanistan has broken the record of Vietnam war.

Now, the question arises whether the monthly firing of half a million rockets over residential areas in the past eight months has been carried out by Soviet troops to defame Mujahiddins, whether Mujahiddin have forgotten their claim that over 95 percent of the cities' citizens were their supporters and why they are now obliged to use the lethal weapons on their supporters, the article stresses.

Why the people of the world, the article emphasizes, do not ask the human rights supporters that whether they can topple the people's sovereignty by using rockets on civilians, whether Americans have forgotten their defeat in Vietnam and why don't they take a lesson from their defeat in the past several months in Afghanistan, or, they want to test their newly-produced weapons on the Afghan land because Afghans are killed in this war [sentence as received]. The war could be ended soon if one of the warring sides were Americans, French or Britishers.

These hard days will pass but the Afghans will never forget the American "humanist" assistance and those of Pakistan's "democratic" militarists by putting at the disposal of the Afghan enemy mass killing rockets and other heavy weapons and its hatred will remain for ever in the minds of Afghans who are sustaining huge human and material casualty from such assistance, the article concludes.

Bangladesh

AFP Reports Police Raid, Strife in Eastern Village

BK1412132489 Hong Kong AFP in English 1311 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Text] Dhaka, Dec 14 (AFP)—Fire wiped out an entire village in eastern Bangladesh following a police raid on the house of a self-proclaimed religious leader now undergoing brain surgery here, local residents and doctors said Thursday.

A resident of Kishoreganj district said by telephone that at least 200 homes and a large quantity of ripe crops were destroyed by the fire set by police in the district's Shimulia village, site of the fortress-like home of Matiur Rahman before police razed it on Wednesday.

Doctors at Dhaka's Post Graduate Hospital said Mr. Rahman's condition was stable and that he was undergoing brain surgery for a bullet wound.

Mr. Rahman, a retired major and a veteran of Bangladesh's 1971 war of independence, fled with the bullet wound to his head and surrendered late Wednesday when cornered by security forces at the village of Tuk Moina in Gazipur district, 40 kilometers from Shimulia, a source here said.

The resident said mortar shells fired by the police had completely destroyed Mr. Rahman's home, adding that 19 people, including a 25-year-old woman and two policemen, were killed in the battle. The other 16 [killed] were followers of Mr. Rahman.

Police earlier confirmed 19 deaths, including two policemen, during the battle.

Mr. Rahman and his followers fought a pitched battle for more than 40 hours with some 1,000 police armed with

mortars and automatic weapons who were trying to free two policemen held captive since Monday by Mr. Rahman.

The two police detectives were detained at Mr. Rahman's home after being dispatched there to investigate allegations of money swindling and other financial irregularities, sources said.

Mr. Rahman was earlier convicted of swindling money from a housing project owned largely by defence officials.

Local officials said police used powerful weapons to raze the house, where the spiritual leader hosted frequent religious gatherings, because "we think they have underground facilities."

A small quantity of arms were seized and several bunkers were discovered at the end of the battle Wednesday.

The BANGLAR BANI, the only daily published Thursday as most news organizations observed a 24-hour strike to protest a government ban of an opposition newspaper, quoted local people as saying that the religious leader had about 4,000 armed followers.

Most of his followers fled when the battle started.

Mr. Rahman, who has four wives, preached that women should not take jobs and should dress from head to toe and stay indoors in line with strict Moslem custom, the newspaper said.

The BANGLAR BANI said Mr. Rahman bought about 100 acres around his home and set up various small industries to support himself and his followers.

India

Prime Minister Speaks at First News Conference

Comments on Kashmir, Economy

BK1512093689 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 15 Dec 89

[Text] The prime minister, Mr Vishwanath Pratap Singh, has declared that there is no question of any compromise on the country's territorial integrity and unity while settling the problems in Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab. Addressing his first formal news conference as prime minister in New Delhi today, he said the government would not adopt a mechanical approach to problems by depending solely on administrative measures, but would harness the support of the people at large to resolve them. He said the situation in Jammu and Kashmir is delicate, but no precipitate action would be taken. The government is assessing the entire situation and the state chief minister has been called to New Delhi for consultations.

The All India Radio [AIR] special correspondent reports that the press conference was one of the largest held in the capital and Mr V.P. Singh fielded a large number of questions on a variety of subjects during his more than 100-minute meet with the domestic and international press. Most of the questions related to the measures to curb terrorism; the situation in Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab; the state of the economy; and his government's plans.

He said one of the major tasks for the government will be to restore democratic institutions and strengthen them. The people will be taken into confidence and his administration would function as an open government. Specifying the immediate task the government would undertake, he said the Lokpal [ombudsman] Bill which had remained pending for some 3 years before a select committee would be introduced in the coming session of parliament beginning on Monday [18 December].

The bill to grant autonomy to AIR and Doordarshan [television] would also be brought forth in the same session. Enactments making it obligatory for ministers to declare their assets would follow. Also high on the agenda are electoral and judicial reforms, bringing the Panchayati Raj [village council-level administrative system] bills which give power to the grass-roots level, while at the same time protect the federal character of the country; and removal of distortions like those involved in the postal bill, which will be withdrawn.

On the economic front, the prime minister said industry will be given a positive boost, especially the small and medium-scale sectors and agro-based industries. Half the total national resources of both the center and the states will be committed to rural areas and problems of youth given special attention, especially the question of unemployment.

Replying to a question on the Bofors gun deal, Mr V.P. Singh reiterated that the law of the land will take its course. There is no question of vindictiveness about it. All other similar issues which were under debate during the last 3 years will be reviewed.

The prime minister said some short-term measures have already been initiated by the government to control the rise in the prices of essential commodities. These will soon have an impact on the price situation. He asserted that generation of black [tax-evaded] money will be curbed through both economic and administrative measures.

About Punjab, the prime minister said that an all-party meeting is scheduled to be held on Sunday to evolve a national consensus on the issue. Mr V.P. Singh stressed the need for creating a proper atmosphere to find a solution to the problem. He said that all sections of the Akali Dal will be involved in the talks.

About the Ram Janambhoomi-Babri Masjid [Hindu-Muslim disputed holy site] issue, the prime minister said that the government is in favor of an amicable solution and would prefer a dialogue. He asserted that communal harmony is being given the utmost priority by the government.

Replying to a question, the prime minister said that a national debate will be initiated next month on economic and social issues like the participation of workers in management.

About reservation [of jobs and facilities for weaker sections of people], he said that the weaker sections should get a helping hand till disparities are removed.

On the National Front's commitment to write off the debts of small and marginal farmers in rural areas, the prime minister said it is a commitment and it will be honored, though the financial state in the country is extremely difficult. A white paper will be brought out on the state of the economy.

When asked about the reports of various commissions which went into the assassination of the former prime minister, Mrs Indira Gandhi, Mr V.P. Singh said that the provisions of the law for withholding the reports will be reviewed. We want to make the reports public and take necessary action on the recommendations.

Stresses Foreign Policy, Defense

BK1512111089 Hong Kong AFP in English 1040 GMT 15 Dec 89

[By Kate Webb]

[Text] New Delhi, Dec 15 (AFP)—Prime Minister Vishwanath Pratap Singh indicated strongly Friday that he would continue India's heavy defence spending despite the budget crunch facing his two-week-old government.

"Certainly we cannot compromise on security," Mr V.P. Singh said when asked at his first news conference since taking office if defence spending might be cut.

"Many times we have to respond to threats from across the border," he said in an apparent reference to Pakistan, with which India has fought three wars.

Defence experts here have said they expect the next defence budget to rise from the current nine billion to 12 billion dollars, with most of the hike already committed for a third aircraft carrier, new tanks, a fast light fighter plane and a satellite launch vehicle.

Mr V.P. Singh, who is also defence minister, stressed that his approach to neighbouring countries such as Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan and Bangladesh would be one of "neighbourliness" and "not of arms and bullying tactics."

"I want to make this very clear," he said. "The strength (of our relationships) lies in mutual understanding."

He added that he was ready to enter into a dialogue with Nepal, with which India has been locked in a bitter trade and transit dispute, and that any new moves on the withdrawal of Indian troops from Sri Lanka would be made in consultation with Colombo.

He also said that there were areas in which India could strengthen ties with Pakistan, but indicated that there would be little change from the previous Indian Government's attitude on nuclear weapons, which linked any agreement between India and Pakistan to global nuclear agreements.

"I think this (the India-Pakistan nuclear question) is not only bilateral but global," he replied when asked if his government would take any steps to negotiate a regional nuclear pact.

On Sri Lanka, the prime minister indicated that the December 31 deadline for the withdrawal of Indian troops might not be hard and fast. Mr V.P. Singh has said he is committed to "bringing the boys home."

"We (India and Sri Lanka) are committed jointly to work out an expeditious deinduction of the forces," he said, but added that "we inherited the situation. We cannot wish away the ground reality that exists today.

"We agreed at the same time that the lives of the Tamil population, their safety and security needs to be ensured, and the devolution and democratic aspirations (of Tamils) have to be ensured," he added, referring to talks last week with Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Ranjan Wijeratne.

India sent troops to Sri Lanka in 1987 under an accord designed to bring peace between the island's majority Sinhala and minority Tamils, but the pact fell apart and since then Indian troops have been bogged down in a vortex of violence in the island state and have lost more than 1,000 men.

Addressing the subject of the country's rising external debt, estimated by the World Bank to have reached 60 billion dollars, he said a decision had not yet been taken on whether or not to resort to an International Monetary Fund loan.

Resolute action would have to be taken and exports boosted, he said, adding that the government was preparing a white paper to let the people know in exactly what economic shape the last government had left the country.

Mr V.P. Singh, 58, was sworn in December 2 after beating his predecessor Rajiv Gandhi in general elections.

Pakistani Reference to Kashmir at UN Criticized

BK1512094089 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 15 Dec 89

[Text] India has taken strong exception to Pakistan's reference to Kashmir at the United Nations during the debate on apartheid. India's ambassador to the world body, Mr Gharekhan, expressed surprise that such an important session, which was to discuss on efforts toward elimination of apartheid, was abused by such extraneous references. He said such actions only divert the attention of the assembly from the struggle against apartheid.

Kashmir Residents Celebrate Release of Militants

BK1312163889 Hong Kong AFP in English 1635 GMT 13 Dec 89

[Text] Srinagar, India, Dec 13 (AFP)—Thousands of cheering, banner waving Muslims shouting "Indian dogs go back" jubilantly took to the streets here Wednesday night to celebrate the release of five militants exchanged for the kidnapped daughter of India's home minister.

The freed girl, Rubina Sayeed, 22, youngest daughter of India's first Muslim home minister Mufti Muhammad Sayeed, was driven pale and shivering to her home, a one storey bungalow, after being held for six days by the militant Jammu and Kashmir National Liberation Front (JKNLF).

The JKNLF, who had threatened to kill her if their five colleages were not released from jails throughout this Muslim-majority state, let her go at dusk, two hours after the five were freed.

"I am fine and in good health," the black-eyed medical internist told journalists who mobbed her on arrival. "The militants gave me a book, the Holy Koran, and directed me to study it. They did not give me any trouble but told me to convey 'our message to your father—that one day we will get Kashmir liberated from Indian occupation.'"

Despite being wrapped in a Kashmiri woolen robe, witnesses said she was shivering with cold and apparent fright, and appeared panic stricken and pale after her six day ordeal.

Ms. Sayeed was taken to the release point in a crowded area of the city by a three wheeled scooter, a common form of public transport, whisked off in a jeep, and turned up at her residence in the car of a local journalist.

She was flown almost immediately by Air Force plane with family members to a reunion with her father in New Delhi. Accompanying her was Indian External Affairs Minister I.K. Gujral, who had rushed to the northern state early Wednesday morning after negotiations were reported stalled.

Even before she had left, Srinagar—summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir—had erupted in jubilation.

Police and paramilitary were ordered off the streets to avoid any untoward incident as crowds poured through the city in "victory" processions, exploding fire crackers, shouting anti-India slogans and hailing the released men who immediately went underground.

Observers said the street celebrations, held despite bitterly cold winds blowing from the Himalayan Mountains, appeared to be self policed, with none of the previously routine stoning of police and Army vehicles and attempts to torch government buildings.

Unofficial estimates put the number that took to the streets at 40,000, and JKNLF and Pakistani flags could be seen flying from rooftops.

The released men have been identified as Sher Khan, a Pakistani resident, Muhammad Altaf Bhat, Hamid Khan, Noor Muhammad and Javed Ahmed Zargar.

The JKNLF is the most prominent of several militant Muslim groups that has turned to violence in the past few years to protest Indian rule of Kashmir, India's only Muslim-majority state over which Pakistan and India have fought two of their three wars.

In New Delhi Mr. Sayeed, who was deluged by well wishers after the tense six day vigil, told AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE he did not consider the release of the five militants a "surrender."

"I don't think so ... because you have to deal with terrorism politically," said Mr. Sayeed who has been charged by India's eight-day-old new government with heading a cabinet committee to try to solve the Jammu and Kashmir problem.

He called the kidnapping, which was condemned by scores of Muslim groups in India, and by Pakistan and neighbouring Nepal, "an act of cowardice."

Curfew Imposed in Kashmir Towns After Violence

Army Stages 'Flag March'

BK1512085489 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 15 Dec 89

[Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, curfew has been clamped in four towns of Kashmir Valley and the Army has been called out to assist the civil authorities. The situation is under control in the four towns of Srinagar, Sopor, Baramula and Anantnag. In Srinagar, Baramula, and Sopor, curfew was clamped at 0500 this morning, while in Anantnag it was clamped at 0930 following some violent incidents in these towns.

In Baramula, one person was killed and two injured in the police firing. As already reported, in Sopor curfew was imposed following mob violence yesterday. An official spokesman told our Srinagar correspondent a short while ago that no untoward incident has been reported from any of the four towns so far. The Army staged a flag march in these areas.

Shoot-on-Sight Order Imposed

BK1512030289 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 15 Dec 89

[Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, an indefinite curfew has been clamped in the entire Srinagar City. According to an official spokesman, shoot-at-sight orders have been issued and people have been advised to remain indoors.

AIR [All India Radio] Srinagar correspondent understands that the steps have been taken in view of the

deteriorating law and order situation in the Kashmir valley, especially in Srinagar City. The decision to this effect was taken at a high-level meeting in Srinagar yesterday, which reviewed the law and order situation in the valley. It was attended by high-ranking civil and police officers from the Kashmir division and the Army and paramilitary authorities. Paramilitary forces have been posted in various parts of Srinagar for maintaining law and order.

Meanwhile, the state cabinet met in Jammu yesterday to take stock of the situation in the valley following the release of five subversives in exchange of Dr Rubina Sayeed, the kidnapped daughter of the union home minister, Mufti Muhammad Sayeed.

Earlier, the chief minister, Dr Farooq Abdullah, had refused to make any comment on the law and order situation in the state when newsmen wanted to know his views on the antinational and provocative slogans raised by some elements in some parts of the valley.

The Army staged a flag march in Sopor Town where an indefinite curfew was imposed yesterday following large-scale violence in which one person was killed in police firing. The incident occurred when the crowd turned violent and indulged in heavy stone pelting. They also tried to set a police station on fire. The Army has been called out to assist the civil authorities.

Government 'Reservations' Policy Protested

BK1412150289 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1430 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Text] Normal life in several parts of Uttar Pradesh was disrupted today as the antireservation agitationists went on a rampage, setting vehicles on fire and causing serious damage to public property. The agitation, spearheaded mostly by students, is in protest against the [new government's] announcement that the reservations [of seats in educational and other institutions for people belonging to weaker sections of society] will be extended by 10 years. The areas worst hit are Allahabad and Kanpur. In Allahabad, the Ganga-Gomati Express [train] was detained for several hours. A bogey of the Sarayu Express was set on fire at Prayag Railway Station. In Kanpur also, protesting students damaged buses and disrupted train traffic for some time.

Iran

Midterm Majles Elections Staged 15 Dec

Officials Preview Elections

LD1412190189 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0903 GMT 14 Dec 89

["In Line With the People, In Step With Officials" program; presenter unidentified; with Interior Minister Abdollah Nouri; Atryanfar, deputy political and social minister of the Interior Ministry; and Saqravani, supervisor of the State Elections Headquarters]

[Excerpts] [Presenter] The path of the imam, the words of the imam. [passage omitted] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Good day to you, dear listeners. We are at your service with the program: "In Line With the People, In Step With Officials." I hope each and everyone of you will have a good day. We thank you for listening to our program for this week. As you are aware, we are on the eve of staging the mid-term elections of the Islamic Consultative Assembly in Tehran and five other constituencies for the election of nine deputies. Due to the sensitive nature of this occasion, and in order to acquaint you, dear listeners, with the way the elections are being staged, we thought it essential to invite the respected interior minister to be a guest of our program for this week to reply to your questions about tomorrow's elections, and about other issues relevant to the area of responsibilities of the Interior Ministry. [passage omitted]

Allow me to introduce to you, at the start of the program, today's respected guests: Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Mr Abdollah Nouri, esteemed interior minister; Mr Engineer Atryanfar, deputy political and social minister of the Interior Ministry; and Mr Saqravani, supervisor of the State Elections headquarters are our guests for today. We thank you very much for accepting our invitation and for participating in our program today. [passage omitted]

Well, your excellency, Mr Nouri, I have a variety of questions here about tomorrow and the elections, but I want to ask your excellency whether you have any comments to make before I place the questions we have at your disposal.

[Nouri] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Salutes to the pure and blessed soul of our dear and gracious imam, and good day to all dear listeners. We will be conducting elections in six constituencies in various parts of the country. In the Tehran, Rey, and Shemiran constituency, four deputies have to be elected to the Islamic Majles. In the Karaj and Eshtehar, one deputy is needed; Kerman, Kashan, Kordkuy and Torkaman, and Kuhdasht and Dowrehchegini, each need one deputy.

Planning for the elections began 3 months ago so that, God willing, tomorrow, nine deputies will be elected to the Majles. During the 3 months that have passed, various kinds of activities—for instance, assessing the candidates' eligibilities and activities, which needed executive committees or supervisory committees—have been carried out with the full coordination which the Interior Ministry has with the respected Guardian Council.

Tomorrow, balloting will begin at 0700 and last until 1700 for the election of the nine deputies referred to, and we hope—God willing—that with the good participation of our dear and honored nation and the people who are

in these constituencies, we will have a good and splendid election. The preparations that were needed from the various executive, safety and security aspects were all planned in advance, and inspection teams from the Interior Ministry have been formed to ensure that the elections will be conducted well. We hope that we shall have good, healthy, and calm elections, which will achieve the results desired by the people through their vote, for the Islamic consultative Assembly and our country.

[Presenter] God willing. Thank you very much. Mr Atryan, could you please tell us what time voting will begin and close, and will voting hours be increased or not?

[Atryan] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. I thank the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which is showing its positive sensitivities toward the elections. [passage omitted] Depending on the situation in the constituencies, it may be found that the voting period may be extended. The extension of the time for the staging of the election depends on his excellency, the interior minister. If he deems it necesary on the basis of the reports that will be received from the constituencies, his excellency will issue instructions for any extensions. We hope that during the appropriate opportunity at our disposal, we will have good balloting in all constituencies.

[Presenter] Thank you very much. I think the question of birth certificates has posed a problem, and this was raised in the past during former elections. In balloting this problem usually revolved around the issue of old and new birth certificates. Has anything been done in this connection for tomorrow's elections? Mr Saqravani.

[Saqravani] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Good day to our dear compatriots. The question of birth certificates is not going to be as serious as in the previous rounds of elections. [passage omitted]

[Presenter] Can those whose birth certificates were issued in the provinces vote in Tehran, and—vice-versa—can those with birth certificates issued in Tehran, but who live in the provinces, also vote in the provinces?

[Saqravani] The criterion for participating in the elections is not the birth certificate; the criterion is participation in the general elections—that is, if there are persons who participated in the general elections in Tehran, then they also have to take part in Tehran this round; they cannot participate in any other constituency. Only those who did not participate in the previous elections—for some reason they did not succeed in participating and have no stamps on their document showing their participation in the general elections—can vote in any constituency. [passage omitted]

[Presenter] Excuse me, Mr Nouri, what happens if two or more candidates have similar names? This might create problems for the people. Have you thought of a solution to this problem to help the people vote for the candidate of their choice?

[Nouri] You raised a very good point. It would be wise for our dear listeners, who take part in the elections because of their feelings of duty, to write the first names of the candidates on their ballot papers. They must definitely do so in order to save us, and officials in charge of the elections, from difficulties. Failure to do so might invalidate their vote. We might have similar names for the candidates in some constituencies. If their first names are not mentioned in the ballot papers, this will create problem for us when we count the number of votes. Of course, if that were to happen, we and the esteemed Guardian Council have thought of some measures in order to prevent waste of votes. For instance, it might happen that out of the four candidates in Tehran constituency there are some similar names. This might create confusion, and we, for instance, might have to divide the unclear votes among the candidates. [as heard] However, we think the best method would be the observation of accuracy by the people themselves. That is, they should make certain that their vote goes to the candidate of their choice. We therefore seriously recommend that the people who can read and write should write down the first names of their candidates; if there are possibly some people who are illiterate, who ask someone else to fill their ballot paper, they should make certain that the first names are mentioned.

[Presenter] Thank you very much. Some listeners ask about the minimum voting age. We have had several telephone calls about age; and another listener has asked: My son is 16 years old, and we have not had time to change his birth certificate yet. Can my son vote with his old birth certificate? Mr Atryanfar, please.

[Atryanfar] The minimum age for voting is 16 years. That is, our dear listeners should realize that their children who have completed the age of 15 and have just become 16, can vote. In fact, the starting age is the beginning of 16. In fact, people born on 15 December 1974, or before that date, can vote. Naturally, anyone born after that date cannot vote. If anyone has not changed his birth certificate he can still vote with the old certificate, for the Birth and Death Registration Organization, in its statement, has extended the time limit for changing old birth certificates until the end of December.

[Presenter] Thank you [passage indistinct] [passage omitted] Mr Nouri, we have not said anything about the number of candidates. Could you please tell us how many candidates we have for this round of the Majles elections?

[Nouri] The total number of candidates who managed to register their names within the time limit is 117 for the six constituencies. Of this figure of 117 registered names, 69 were from Tehran and 48 from the remaining five constituencies. So far, 12 candidates have resigned.

Naturally the candidates should be endorsed by the Executive Committee. This committee endorsed 52 of the candidates. Some of the rejected candidates pursued their case by appealing to the Supervisory Commission, and as a result, 20 of them were endorsed. Consequently, there is a total of 72 candidates. However, eight of the candidates are among those who submitted their resignation; that is, some of the 12 candidates mentioned earlier. This means there are 64 candidates left. Out of the figure of 64 candidates, 38 are the endorsed candidates from Tehran, and the remaining 26 belong to the other five constituencies. [passage omitted]

[Presenter] Excellency Atryanfar, what stages led to the elections?

[Atryanfar] As Excellency Nouri said, work began 1 month earlier. Within a specified time frame, as determined by law, these affairs have been accomplished. According to the law, the executive teams have specified timetables to perform their work. There is a specified time period within which those whose applications have been rejected can hand in their appeal to the supervisory board. The time frame is suitable—apparently 4 days. The supervisory boards will immediately survey the case and advise the executive boards of their views. The executive boards will then inform the governor of the decision. The governor will then include in the relevant list the names of those whose appeal against rejection of their qualification has been successful—those whose qualification has been accepted.

[Nouri] Of course, the time frame is 5 days; for the supervisory board the time to review the case is 5 days.

[Presenter] Excellency Atryanfar, can returnees and non-Iranians who reside in Iran participate in elections?

[Atryanfar] Before answering you I must say that we hold all those who have taken refugee in Iran from Iraq or Afghanistan, or all those who have come to the Islamic Republic of Iran during the war or afterwards, in great esteem. But, as according to law the voter must have an [Iranian] identity booklet—it is the principal document to vote—regretfully I must say that brothers among Iraqis or Afghans who do not possess Iranian identity cannot vote. I can state here that the Afghans cannot have Iranian identity booklets, but returnees from Iraq who were originally of Iranian nationality, who were living in Iraq in the past and who have returned home, can vote, since they have Iranian identity booklets. Like all other Iranian nationals they can go to constituencies to cast their votes according to the declared criteria. Being of Iranian nationality is the basic and inevitable condition for eligibility to vote. [passage omitted]

[Presenter] Excellency Atryanfar, inspection of the constituencies: Have you made provisions, and how are they going to be carried out?

[Atryanfar] The Interior Ministry has two basic duties with regard to the elections. One is that of holding the elections, for which a great deal of preparations have been made and for which all resources are mobilized. In addition there is the responsibility for good elections. Here we have various cases. One is that of preparing the necessary ground for executive teams, coordination with the Council of Guardians, and security. To carry out the elections in the best possible way, the Interior Ministry usually sets up inspections teams. In general elections we establish a central inspection team to cover the whole of the country. [passage omitted]

However, in mid-term elections we do not have a great number of constituences—we have only six constituencies during the present mid-term elections. In Tehran, which has its own peculiar sensitivity, as well as similar constituences, we naturally set up inspections teams to supervize and ensure orderly elections. If they see difficulties or misdeeds, they act according to specific trends. They assess the situation and confront it accordingly.

[Presenter] Excellency Nouri, we have now talked about elections, but there are questions on other topics. Among questions being asked, one concerns the private members bill at the Majles on the Afghans and the decisions adopted, or to be adopted, regarding that issue. Please could you inform us about them.

[Nouri] With regard to this topic, though not related to the elections, it is of interest to many of our brothers and sisters as well as those in the Majles. I think I must refer to the private members' bill presented to the Majles concerning rounding-up refugees and settling them in camps. I will remark later on the views of the Interior ministry.

You and our great nation know, and the international forums also confirm, that Iran has been and continues to be a host to the Muslim brothers and sisters who have been subject to invasion and pressure, and even subject to poverty and destitution. For more than 10 years we have played host to the people of Afghanistan; our hospitality has been above imagination. Every year, in our national budgets, we have allocated large sums to help the foreign nationals who have chosen the Islamic Republic of Iran because of the difficulties they face. We have helped all dear ones from Iraq to the full extent of the Islamic Republic of Iran's resources. We host something like 3 million Afghan brothers and sisters in Iran. Also a very high figure relates to the brothers and sisters from Iraq—including those from Kurdish areas and those from Arab populated areas. [passage omitted]

The problem which has been brought to our notice, which is the real reason for the debate in the Majles, is that unfortunately some of these migrants have caused problems. Here I must say that I am talking about some of them and not all of them. We have many honorable chaste, committed, qualified, struggling, and crusading individuals among the Afghan and Iraqi brothers and sisters living in Iran. They may stay in Iran for as long as they desire unless they decide to return, or, if the difficulties over there [Afghanistan and Iraq] are solved, then they will return.

However, we also have others from among them who brought in diseases; they brought about health problems for us. And there have been others among them who are responsible for bringing narcotics in to Iran, and they insist on doing so. There are others who spread corruption. Indeed, we see numerous cases among them of committing offences.

In any case, we demand identity cards from everyone, including Iranian nationals. Anyone here must have some identity papers by which we may identify him. The Islamic Republic of Iran has repeatedly announced that foreigners who want to stay in the Islamic Republic of Iran must have identity cards, and that their residence in Iran must be sanctioned through permits. That is also so if they want to move around in Iran, but unfortunately we see that some groups and individuals have not done so. They have made unauthorized travel. We have no choice but to prevent corruption and offences in our country in an effort to defend it and to provide security.

Though we [as heard] are not in favor of the private members' bill presented to the Majles, we do share the same view that we should strongly confront corruption, offences, and those individuals who do not have identity cards. God willing, we will accomplish this task in our planning. [passage omitted] We have had meetings with the Afghan Coalition Council. It confirmed that offenders must be confronted.

[Presenter] Is the question of narcotics entering the country through the eastern borders included in your plan?

[Nouri] One of the issues we discussed in our talks, in our recent trip, with Pakistani officials was the fact that in principle the borders with Pakistan must not be the points of entry and departure for Afghans. Afghans who seek asylum in Iran or want to be in Iran come through the Afghan border with Iran rather than the Pakistan border. That was agreed to by the government of Pakistan; it was included in the memorandum of understanding signed between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Pakistan. Traffic of Afghans via the Pakistan border is prohibited. We will announce this soon. As regards the border with Afghanistan, our program calls, God willing, for choosing 10 entry points for legal passage and quarantine. The locations have been selected; these will be the only points for traffic, where cards will be distributed authorizing travel by individuals from those locations. All the problems to which we referred will be controlled at these points. [passage omitted]

[Presenter] Your excellency Mr Nouri, many of our listeners have asked about the plan to merge various security forces, something which has been discussed for some time. Can you provide any explanation on this matter for our dear listeners? [passage omitted]

[Nouri] As you certainly know, the bill to merge various security forces was submitted by the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Islamic Consultative Assembly about a month ago. There were detailed and good discusions on it in the Cabinet on the general features and whether there is any need for a merger or not. After these discussions concluded and the merger was approved by the Cabinet as the result of a serious and decisive vote, there was discussion about the description of the security forces' duties and general approval, the results of which were sent to the Majles for their final vote. We hope that the Majles will quickly clarify the situation regarding the security forces. I believe that this is one of the issues about which our people, too, have very good views, because they are in daily contact with them.

At the moment, we have a number of different types of security forces: the police, gendarmerie, [revolution] committees, and smaller forces which carry out security work. In connection with former divisions, we had an urban police forces which was called Shahrbani, and because of the distances between cities and rural areas, the villages, a kind of cultural duality existed between the towns and the cities. The police force was established for the cities and the gendarmerie was established for areas outside cities, for roads, villages, and the borders. At the moment, due to the fact that the two cultural systems which existed in the past no longer exist, the culture of our town dwellers and our villagers are close, in addition to the fact that many of our towns and villages have become joined, especially in the northern areas, also, in many parts of the cities there are no serious cultural differences between villages and towns. Therefore, we have no serious need to have forces under these two categories.

However, on the law and order issues we make greater use of the police and gendarmerie, while in security issues we make greater use of the forces of the committees. Because these two different missions are closely linked there does not seem to be any need to separate them. The proposal which has been been made by the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Islamic Consultative Assembly is the complete unification of all the security forces which will be responsible for all the law and order and security matters in the country, from the borders to the capital, and from the capital to the borders, whether in connection with security issues, law and order issues, corruption and forbidden things, narcotics, policing the roads between cities and rural areas, or traffic police inside the cities and the like. In other words, the entire complex should be in one place together.

I think that if it is approved by the Islamic Consultative Assembly and sent back to the government for implementation, during the course of and after its implementation the people will witness a transformation in the work of the security forces. At the moment, perhaps one of the problems we are facing is that our people do not know the many different types of police and security forces they should be dealing with. Different people under different titles go to the people and make various demands on them. One has a warrant, another wants to

inspect their house. In our view it is quite clear that changes should be made in this.

The people should know that they are dealing with one uniform, one organization, one identity card with similar details, and that all of them act on security and law and order issues within the context of one framnework which has been approved by the system. People will then know that they may deal with it with complete trust and know who that person is and in what connection he has the right to deal with them.

There are various issues which I think are mainly of a technical nature vis-a-vis the multiplicity of forces. education, training, policies and the like, which I do not think can be raised within the confines of your program. However, briefly, on the basis of many extensive discussions which have been held and decisions which have been reached in the esteemed Cabinet, the government decisively believes in merging the various security forces. We hope that with the view that will be expressed by the esteemed Majles, we will be able to move toward the creation of better security forces with greater content on one hand; and on the other, respond to the wishes of our people.

[Presenter] The form of the merge is not clear, Hajj Aqa [form of address to a person who has performed hajj pilgrimage]. On the whole, it is going to be a single security force, but what is the form of such a merge? Can a force be dissolved into another or can all those forces come under a new system of administration?

[Nouri] All those forces are going to be formed as—the security force—and I think it is out of the range of your time here. But if we want to consider one province, for example a province with 100,000 people, in towns and villages and on the roads and so on, you see that for those 100,000 people there are approximately 400-500 security forces which are divided into three groups: One group is formed of our dear brothers in the committees, one is formed of our brothers in the police, and one is formed of our brothers is the gendarmerie. All three need three headquarters, three comands, and that by itself becomes the beginning of a lack of coordination and not the beginning of coordination and activity. For the purpose of uniting the political management in provinces, we need a united force at the disposal of the political management to estabish security and order. Of course there are many discussions about that which is out of our time limits.

[Presenter] thank you very much. Please let us go to town to our colleague reporter. I think our connection is there. We are ready to receive your report. [passage omitted] Very well. Let us go back to the issue of the elections. Our listeners have asked when the results of the elections in Tehran and other constituences will be announced. Mr Saqravani, please.

[Saqravani] Following the voting, the counting will begin immediately. Of course no time limit has been forseen in the law or the rules and regulations for counting votes. In some constituencies it is going to take longer because of population concentrations and because of their large geographic areas. Also, in other constituencies the vote counting will be finished earlier. [passage omitted] Therefore, there is no time limit, but we foresee—apart from Tehran, which has a large population and where the counting of votes can take time—in other constituences, for example, within 12 to 15 hours the outcome should be known, if nothing happens.

[Presenter] Thank you very much. The issue of the campaign against Western culture and its corruptive influence has always been raised in the remarks of the honorable leader of the revolution. The Interior Ministry also presented a plan to the cabinet a while ago. Mr Nouri, please tell us about the most important issues raised in the plan and when we can expect to witness its implementation. Also a lady asks you, Mr Nouri, about the campaign against Western culture and its corruptive influence. She mentions that in some parts of Tehran corrupt books and tapes are sold, and no one stops those actions. Who is responsible for attending to that situation? She requests an answer.

[Nouri] In connection with the issue of the campaign against corruption and unlawful acts, I deem it necessary to tell you that the issue of dealing with them is a deep issue which is first a cultural issue. Therefore it is not possible to take no cultural measures, and persist to deal with the issue through security channels or through the judicial channels via the judicial power. We should create cultural grounds for the expansion of propriety and improvements and obviously in this connection the organizations involved in cultural activities should do the most. I think the same way that the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran. They used good programs on drug addiction and narcotics, and the Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran produced good films and they were broadcast and had very positive effects. The Voice and Vision and in general the establishments belonging to the Minisry of Guidance and the cinemas of the Islamic Republic of Iran and organizations connected to arts and film-making in the Islamic Republic of Iran can play a very proper role in cultural propagation and for a cultural move toward the elimination of corruption and the expansion of Islamic features in our society, for our families and for all our surroundings.

This is the most fundamental issue that should be considered in a brave society such as ours, and we believe that the most influential issue for the men and women of our society is that issue.

But alongside tackling that issue, the Ministry of Interior, because of its obligation to deal with corruption and unlawful acts, undertook a great many activities during that period. First in some long and detailed meetings, where various groups worked on them. Finally we reached a conclusion which was discussed at the meeting of the country's Security Council, and, last, a plan was presented to the Islamic Consultative Majles.

The reason we did not follow it through the Cabinet was because we believe, as the dear listeners also mention, it needed immediate action. We thought that if it went through the Cabinet ministers channels, it might have been delayed a while. Therefore, I said to the honorable deputies of the Majles that if they agreed that the plan be given to the honorable deputies without going through the Cabinet and be raised in the Majles and if it was confirmed and approved, then we would implement it.

But the point that is worth paying attention to is that during this period some minor things have been done. They are not things that have satisfied the Interior Ministry or that we stop at. But they are things that could have apparently created serious corruption in the society, they were dealt with and we are still dealing with them.

Around 20 days before the start of the month of Moharram [month in which the third imam was martyred and since then mourning ceremonies have taken place in Islamic and particularly Shiite societies] we saw marriage caravans that were staged in some very decadent ways in the streets of Tehran and some other towns. People came out, sometimes in an inappropriate manner. A stop was put to that in an action which was taken.

In connection with rascals and villains who created disturbances and in areas such as colleges, universities, high schools, and so on a lot of our sisters used to come and go there, they used to create disturbances. We dealt with them seriously. Time and time again people have thanked us for that.

In connection with the system of our bus services, as you know, millions of people are transported daily by buses and minibuses. We have acted in that regard, and some work has begun on the segragation, and we continue our actions toward its completion for the segregation of sisters and brothers which brought once again a lot of approval and thanks. Of course we ourselves believe that these works that I am mentioning are minor works, and they are not all of the work that we should do, and we think that if the plan for the campaign against unlawful acts is approved, it can be a useful thing on the basis of which the Interior Ministry can act.

[Presenter] Thank you very much. We do not have much time until the end of the program. Our colleague reporter is ready to make contact with us. We are ready to hear your voice, Mr Nezam Eslami. [passage omitted]

Official Reviews Logistics

NC1512065989 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 15 Dec 89

[Studio interview with Saqravani, head of the Interior Ministry's Election Headquarters, by correspondent Solhi—live]

[Text] [Solhi] Thank you for coming here. We would like to ask you to speak to our listeners about the elections that got under way an hour ago.

[Saqravani] In the name of God, the almighty, the merciful. Greetings dear compatriots. More than 3,200 polling stations have been set up in the six constituencies of Tehran, Karaj, Kuhdasht, Kerman, Kordkuy, and Kashan and will be open from 0700 to 1700 so that our compatriots can vote for their candidates. All necessary steps have been taken to provide the necessary equipment as well as to ensure security. We hope that these elections, like those in the past, will take place in a very calm and healthy atmosphere.

I want to discuss two major points here. The first point is who can participate in these elections. As has been repeatedly stated, a voter must be a citizen of the Islamic Republic of Iran and be at least 16 years old. Therefore, all persons born on or before 24 Azar 1353 [15 December 1974] and who hold an Iranian identity card can participate in the elections. Thus, there is no problem if one is a war refugee living in one constituency, or a person repatriated from Iraq and holding an Iranian identity card, or any other person. The only condition that all the voters should meet is that they should vote in the same constituency where they voted in the last national election. Thus, those who voted in another constituency during the national elections—let us say, as an example, Mashhad—cannot vote in Tehran, Kordkuy, or Kashan. The only exception is if they did not participate in the earlier election for one reason or another. Also, the voters must hold the original copy of their identity card. Even those born in 1353 [1974] who have not yet applied to change their identity cards can use their old identity cards for this purpose.

The second point is that measures will be taken so that those in sanatoriums, garrisons, hospitals, and prisons can participate in the elections. Roving polling stations will go to these places and people will be able to cast their votes. Those who have sick people at home and those who cannot leave their homes for one reason or another can contact the offices of the Tehran or other constituencies' commanders and give their address so that the roving stations can go to their home before 1700.

I have two important pieces of advice to my compatriots. The first is that those people who are unable to read or write should take a person whom they trust with them so that he can write the ballot for them. The other is that since the names of some candidates are similar, as was also the case in the last election, the first name of the candidate should be written out so that the people's true and decisive vote will be registered.

The last point is that the Tehran province supervision committee is stationed in the Interior Ministry and people who observe any violations in the Tehran and Karaj constituencies can inform the committee at the telephone numbers already given in this newscast, that is 656709 and 657009.

[Solhi] We thank you for your explanations. If you do not have anything to add, we will continue with our newscast.

[Saqravani] No, thank you.

Khamene'i Casts Vote

LD1512103689 Tehran IRNA in English 0917 GMT 15 Dec 89

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 15, IRNA—Iranians in Tehran and five other cities went to the polls since early in the morning to elect nine new deputies to the Majles, including four from Tehran constituency.

In Tehran voting for the Majles by-elections started at 07:00 hours (03:30 GMT) and despite the cold weather and rainfall, IRNA reports from various stations, indicate that the people are enthusiastically attending the polls to elect their representatives.

According to another report, at 08:10 hours (04:40 GMT), the leader of the Islamic revolution, Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i, cast his vote in a mobile station.

In a meeting with a group of people earlier this week, Ayatollah Khamene'i stressed the need for active participation in the Majles by-elections as a "divine-political-revolutionary move." He also reiterated that the country's destiny was decided by the people and that the Islamic state's independence, honour and dignity depended on the people's active presence in the political scene.

Majles Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Mahdi Karrubi too attended a polling station at 09:30 (06:00 GMT) this morning and cast his vote. He also inspected the election procedure in the said poll.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Comments

LD1512111289 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 15 Dec 89

[Text] Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani, president of the Republic, arrived this morning at Jamaran to cast his vote for the candidates in the Majles midterm election. He cast his vote in ballot box No. 2075.

On the people's constructive role in determining their own fate he said:

[Begin Hashemi-Rafsanjani recording] We have pinned our hopes on people to remain interested in their own fate. We hope they continue to show interest. The day the people are indifferent to the elections, specifically to the Majles, will be the day when they have let go of their own fate.

Thanks be to God that there are many qualified individuals among the candidates and that the people have a choice. Though these are midterm elections, which lack the excitement of a general election, they will still be influential in determining the fate of the people. So I hope those who attract the people's votes can perform their duties for the people well. May God will it so. [end recording]

Withdrawal of Candidates Denied

LD1512112289 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 15 Dec 89

[Text] In view of some rumors about the withdrawal of candidacies by some of the elections candidates in Tehran constituency, the Elections Headquarters of the country has announced: The number of the candidates in Tehran's constituency is 38, and the names of all of them have been advertised in the Elections Headquarters and polling booths. In view of the fact that the deadline for the withdrawal of the candidates has ended, there is no possibility for candidates to withdraw their candidacies.

On the basis of this statement, any rumor about the withdrawal of any of the candidates is strongly denied, and the special inspectors in Tehran province and the representatives of the Tehran governor are duty-bound to deal strictly with such rumors.

Pakistan

PPP Demonstration Fired Upon; One Injured

BK1412154289 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Text] A press note issued by the district magistrate of Badin said that workers of the Pakistan People's Party [PPP] took out a procession today as a protest against the killing of (Mir Wasi Talpur) in Karachi and the shooting incident in Hyderabad. Some trouble-makers fired at the procession, injuring one.

The press note said that three culprits have been arrested, and the firearm that was used during the attack was recovered from one of them. Efforts are under way to arrest the remaining culprits.

Curfew restrictions will be relaxed from 1200 to 1500 in the curfew-bound areas of Hyderabad and Latifabad tomorrow.

Envoy Speaks at Special UN Session on Apartheid

BK1512112089 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 15 Dec 89

[Text] At the United Nations, Pakistan has called for supporting the people's struggle for a democratic life free from terror and exploitation in South Africa, Palestine, Kashmir, Afghanistan, and other parts of the Third World. The attorney general of Pakistan, Mr Yahya Bukhtiar, told the special UN General Assembly session on apartheid last night that the regime in Pretoria must realize that in the march of civilization toward democracy, the universal brotherhood, and equality of man there is no place for the racist system of apartheid.

Agreement Signed on FRG Economic Assistance

BK1412155889 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Text] Under an agreement signed in Islamabad today, the Federal Republic of Germany will give 115 million Deutsche marks to Pakistan for the year 1989, out of which 85 million will be a soft loan and 30 million a grant. The loan will be used for telecommunications, energy, and educational programs; while the grant will be utilized for a children's hospital in Quetta and small hydroelectric power plants in Bassi and Pishi in North-West Frontier Province.